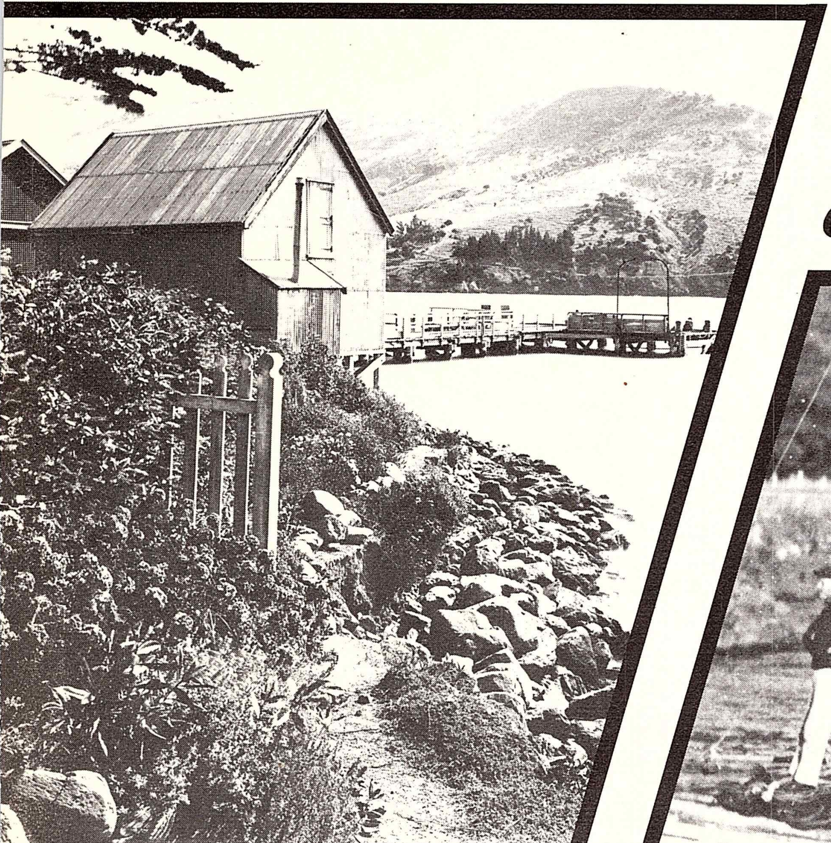
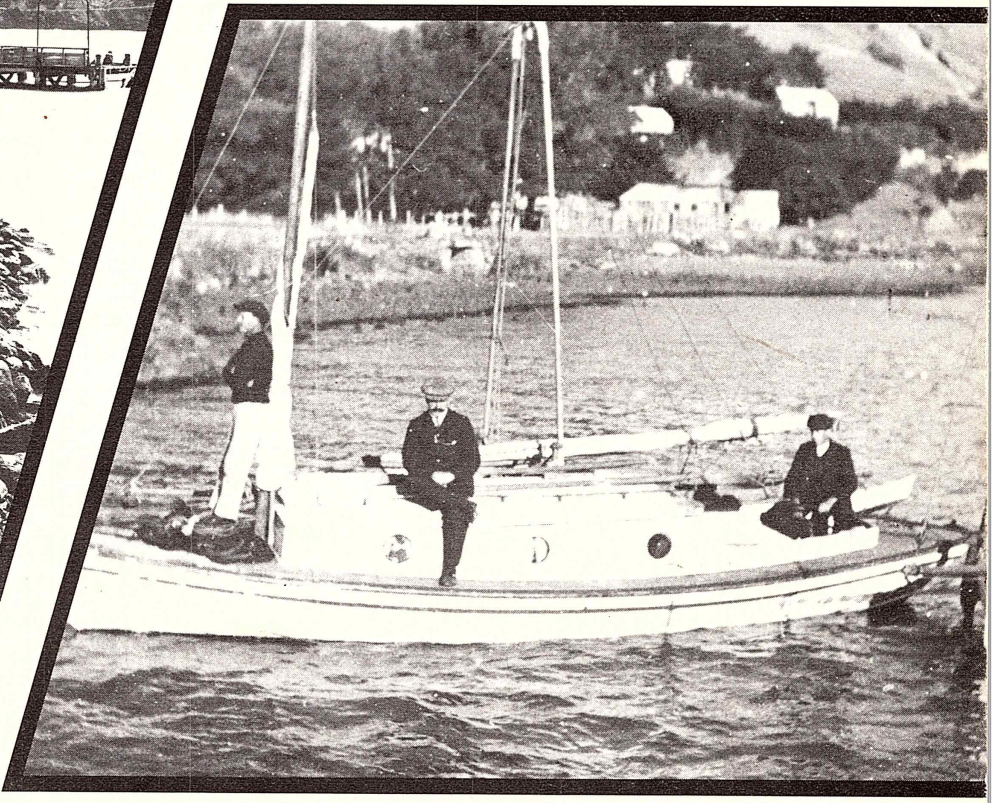
on the move:

Christchurch transport through the years

6. the tidal travellers

the small ships of Canterbury





Tramway
Historical Society

preface

> *"I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,*
> *And all I ask is a tall ship, and a star to steer her by...."*
> *John Masefield (from "Sea Fever")*

As this series of booklets on the history of transport around Christchurch developed, it became apparent that there was one early mode of transport which should take its rightful place in the series. As research continued, this volume, dealing with water transport, began to evolve.

When one considers the long coastline of New Zealand and the numerous islands which make up this country, it is not surprising to find that shipping played a vital role in the development of the early settlements.

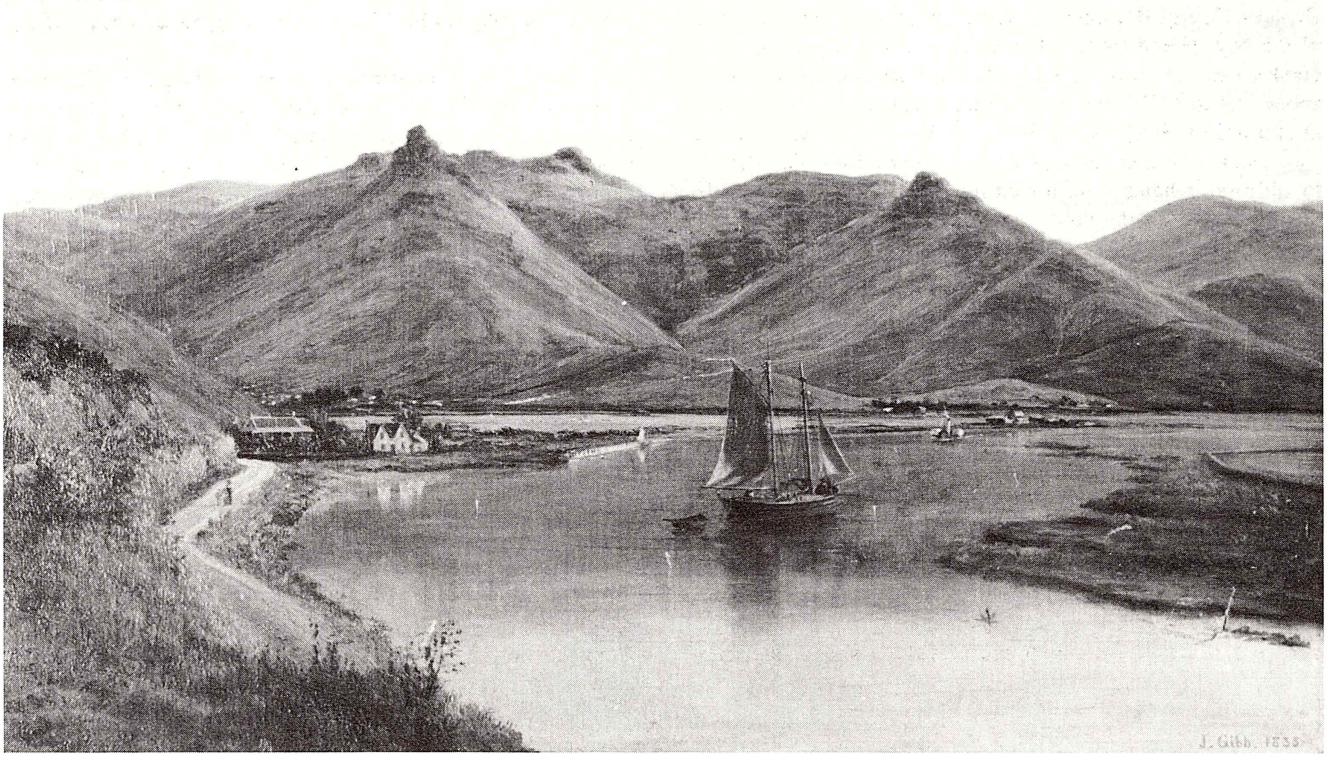
The coastline of New Zealand is not well endowed with many natural harbours, and many towns have had to contend with man-made ports to the present day. For many years, towns had to rely on river ports which provided dangerous bar-bound harbours.

Captain Thomas, the Chief Surveyor of the Canterbury Association, was pleased with his choice of the sheltered harbour at Lyttelton, as the port for his Canterbury settlement. This had earlier been rejected by Tucket, the surveyor for the Scottish settlement, who was more impressed with the Otago Harbour. From the outset Thomas realized that one of the greatest difficulties facing the new settlement would be transport, for both passengers and goods, between the port and the town.

Until the settlers had time to catch their breath and develop a system of railways the only practicable means of transport at their disposal was by water. For some years small vessels plied the many bays, rivers and waterways along the Canterbury coast. This form of transport was expensive, dangerous and may not have been very efficient but, for a time, it was the only means available.

This volume is not a complete history of ships, ports and seamen. Many books cover this already. It is intended to show how the settlers used this mode of transport when no other existed. In this volume you will learn the dangers encountered by vessels crossing the bars at the entrance to ports situated in the rivers, the establishment of ports in the Heathcote, Avon and Kaiapoi Rivers and at Saltwater Creek, the difficulty in loading cargo in some of the Peninsula bays, the reasons why this short-lived mode of transport declined when overtaken by more suitable and safe methods of transport, and a great deal more.

Many New Zealand people now feel they should stop and consider the past. We want to know our roots, from whom we are descended, and what knowledge we can gain from previous generations. If these booklets are successful in any of these aims they will have achieved their purpose.



Ferrymead 1885 from an oil by John Gibb. *Courtesy Canterbury Museum.*

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explorers, surveyors and mariners

early exploration

The first European sighting of the Canterbury coast was on February 16, 1770, when Captain Cook sailed southwards in his ship *Endeavour*. Most of the charts of the New Zealand coast, prepared by Cook were very accurate and were used until the middle of the nineteenth century. There were one or two errors, however, and one of the most notable occurred along the Canterbury coast.

In the weather conditions prevailing at the time, Cook found it impossible to pick up the shoreline of Pegasus Bay. At the same time he was influenced by Lieutenant Gore, who thought he saw land to the South-West and altered course to investigate. As a consequence, Cook's chart showed Banks Peninsula as an island. The weather conditions prevailing at the time of Cook's visit have been experienced on many occasions by present day captains approaching Lyttelton Harbour from the north.

It was indeed fortunate that the weather was clear when Captain Chase endeavoured to sail his ship *Pegasus* to the landward side of Banks Island in 1809 and found himself sailing up a harbour with no way through. Chase named Pegasus Bay "Cooks Mistake". Later, hydrographers changed the name to Pegasus Bay in honour of Chase's ship. In their opinion a navigator as famous as Cook never made a mistake in his charting.

Journals kept by early explorers were keenly read by the seamen of the time. Mention was made of the large colonies of whales and seals along the New Zealand coast.

Marine activity around the Peninsula and along the Canterbury coast started in earnest with the whalers and sealers who began to arrive about 1815. At first these ships were mainly based in Sydney but they did call into many of the bays, trading muskets and gunpowder for flax and potatoes from the local Maori tribes.

the whalers

From 1835 the whalers saw the value of the sheltered bays of Banks Peninsula as bases for their operations and from that date shore stations were established.[1] On March 17, 1835 the brig *Bee* arrived at Peraki, under the command of the German Captain, George Hempleman. Quickly realising the suitability of the bay, Hempleman returned to Sydney to purchase the equipment necessary to establish his shore station, which he completed in 1837. Further whaling stations were established at Hikuraki (1839), Island Bay (1846) with others in quick succession at Oashore Bay (sometimes referred to as Goashore). In addition, whales were towed into Le Bons Bay and Little Port Cooper for trying out.

At this time whaling was a lucrative business with whale bone fetching £160 a ton and whale oil £160 a tun (210 gallons). The number of whaling ships working around the Peninsula grew from 20 until, in 1842, 31 whaling ships worked out of Akaroa alone. Most whalers transported their oil and bone direct to the outside world, usually Australia, in their own ships. On the return voyage these ships brought much-needed supplies to keep the whaling stations going. For the few settlers living on Banks Peninsula the whaling ships were the only link with the outside world, bringing farm implements, clothes and general stores which were often traded for fresh meat and vegetables.

The settlers looked forward to the arrival of a ship so that they could stock up on items such as tea, coffee, flour and other essential goods which were otherwise unobtainable. In between shipments they were forced to make do with local commodities but there was a limit to the amount of pigeon pie and dried manuka tea they could enjoy without longing for some variety.

The whalers were a cosmopolitan lot, hailing from England, France and the U.S.A. The whaling stations were isolated and there was very little communication between them. The workers and sailors were ruled by the iron hand of the whaling captain. The life was hard and the penalties for wrongdoers were extremely harsh.

By the late 1840s whale numbers were becoming depleted. Some of the whaling captains decided to set sail and find other areas where whales could be hunted. Many, however, decided to come ashore and plunder yet another resource – timber. The depletion of the whales had coincided with the start of European settlement in Canterbury. At first this was spasmodic, with about 1,000 settlers being established before the arrival of the first organised colonists in December 1850.

These people all required timber for housing and the whaling crews had a plentiful supply right at their doorsteps. Many came ashore and became the first sawyers and later turned to farming.

coastal surveys

The prominent hills of Banks Peninsula must have been a welcome sight for the whalers and traders who had spent long and often dangerous weeks at sea. Sailing in unknown waters, these sailors had to use their natural instincts to avoid disaster.

As the only maps of the Canterbury coastline were those drawn by Captain Cook, seamen and whalers began to draw their own maps. They were chiefly interested in making a successful landfall to a safe harbour and their maps consisted largely of locations of reefs, shoals, rocks, sandbars and safe anchorages. Because little exploration of the interior had been undertaken the maps contained no detail beyond the coastal fringe. In addition, the maps were very fragmented because they only covered the immediate part of the coast close to a particular whaling station or harbour. They were of little use except to the people who had drawn them.

In the 1830s, both the English and French Hydrographic Offices published charts of various stretches of the New Zealand coastline, based on the charts of the early sailors. Although they contained much valuable information, there was no way of co-ordinating them into a complete map of the coast.

Whilst protecting the interests of French whalers on the Peninsula, the corvette *Heroine*, under the command of Captain Cecille, charted the Akaroa and Lyttelton harbours.

Colonisation of New Zealand gathered pace in the 1840s, encouraged by both British and French interests. Some of the early attempts at settlement ended in disaster and shipwreck on the inadequately charted coastline. The need for accurate charts and surveys was urgent.

In 1841 a survey ship, under the command of Captain E Daniell, explored the Estuary and sent boats eight miles up one of the rivers. The river was not named, but in all probability it was the Heathcote.[2]

In 1847, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty decided that, "a full and accurate survey of the northern, central and southern coasts and harbours of New Zealand should be executed". The ten year old, barque-rigged paddle-steamer *Acheron* was fitted out for this purpose. As well as her engines, which gave her a speed of 10 knots, she carried a fair spread of canvas. This 760 ton vessel, described by Charlotte Godley as "useful rather than ornamental", was one of the first steamers to visit New Zealand.[3]

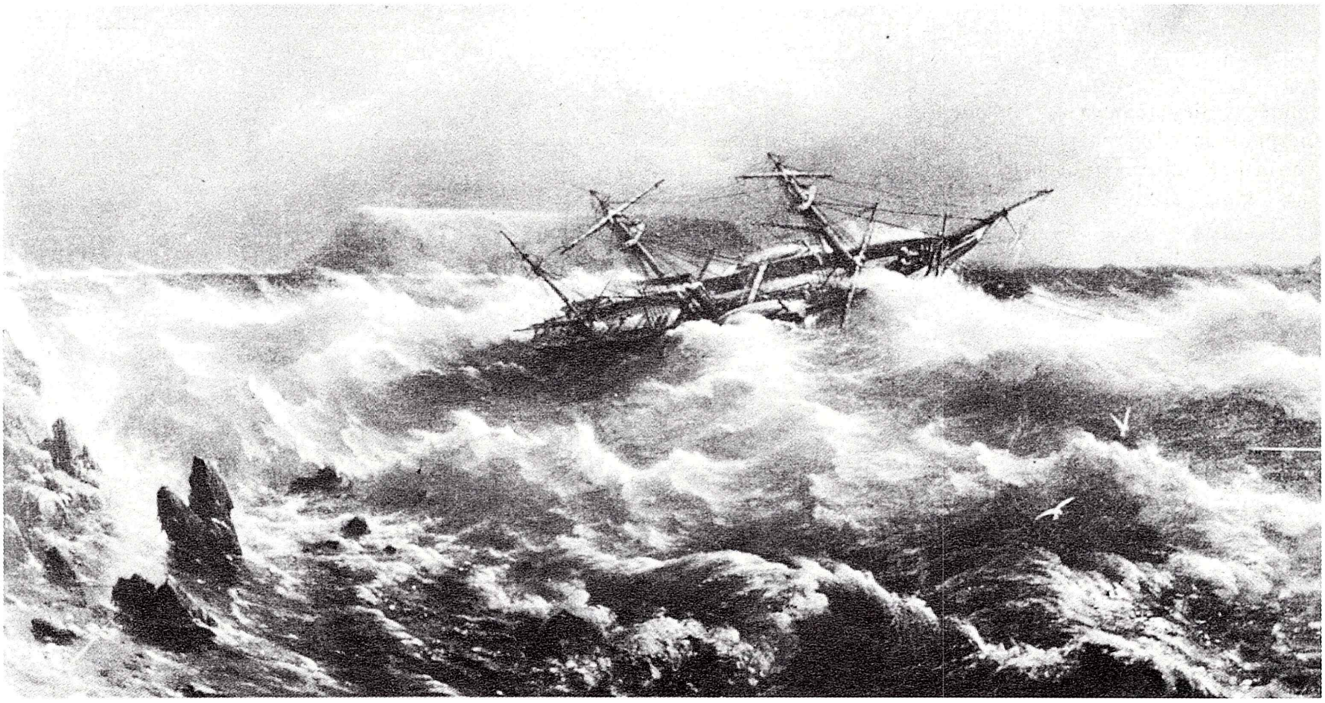
Acheron sailed from Plymouth on January 21, 1848 under the command of John Lort Stokes. An experienced seaman and hydrographer, Stokes was also a keen writer and observer. He rose to the rank of admiral before his death in 1885. As Ship's Master, F J Evans had the responsibility for navigation during the voyage. The rank of Master, beneath that of Captain, has not been used in the Royal Navy for many years.[4]

Among *Acheron's* one hundred crew members were artists and scientists whose job it was to record the nature of the country. Indicative of the fact that *Acheron* was sailing into unknown waters, was the inclusion of gunners to man the ship's main armament, which consisted of five guns.[5]

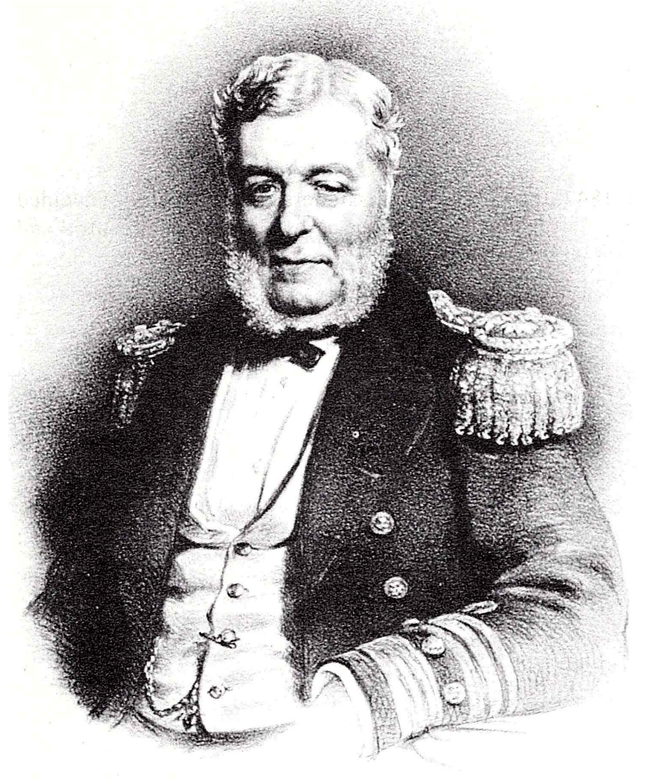
After working around the coasts of the North Island *Acheron* headed south and arrived at Akaroa in February 1849. Being a steamer as well as carrying sail was a distinct advantage when surveying as the ship was not entirely dependent on the weather.[6]

Following her work at Akaroa, *Acheron* set sail on March 3, 1849 and whilst taking soundings at intervals around the Peninsula, reached Port Cooper (Lyttelton) later that day.

The *Acheron's* work on the Canterbury coast coincided with



H.M.S. Acheron, *riding out a terrific gale off the coast of the South Island (R.B. Beechey)*



John Lort Stokes
(1812-85)

the surveys being carried out by the surveyors of the Canterbury Association in preparation for the settlers in 1850. Charles Torlesse, who had explored and surveyed much of the Canterbury Province was able to supply Stokes with valuable information in exchange for which he received reference points from the *Acheron* surveys on which he could base his later maps of Canterbury.[7] Another frequent guest aboard *Acheron* was Joseph Thomas, the Canterbury Association's Chief Surveyor. Thomas and Evans, the Master of the *Acheron*, spent many hours discussing the plans for the new Canterbury settlement. One interesting outcome of these talks was the location of the Lyttelton - Sumner Road. Thomas had planned to take the road over the hills in the vicinity of the present Rapaki Track. As the *Acheron* was moored in Purau, Evans was able to show Thomas a much better alignment which took the road over a low pass (now known as Evans Pass) into the top of the Sumner Valley. Stokes made much use of Thomas's surveys and pronounced his maps as "superior to any others I have seen in the Southern Hemisphere." [8] The *Acheron* also surveyed Port Levy, Pigeon Bay and Sumner Bay.

As well as charting the coast Captain Stokes was also required to report on the countryside and its suitability for the coming colonists. From the top of Mount Pleasant he viewed the vast plain watered by a multitude of silver threaded streams.[9] He then led a shore party and, after visiting the Deans family at Riccarton, they set off for Mount Grey and visited the Maori people at Kaiapoi. Another party explored the upper reaches of the Waimakariri River and the Torlesse Range. They were impressed with the effect on the land of flooding and earthquakes which had produced impressive rock falls and erosion.

In what seems a very strange decision, *Acheron* was paid off, when an estimated twelve months would have seen her work completed. The task of finishing the coastal surveys of New Zealand was given to Captain Byron Drury. In his small, slow vessel, the 319 ton brig *Pandora*, it took Drury four years to complete the surveys. *Pandora* surveyed the Sumner Bar and the channel past Shag Rock as far as Moncks Bay.[10]

In all, some 250 charts were produced from the records supplied by *Acheron* and *Pandora*, and there was hardly a stretch of the New Zealand coast which was lacking an adequate chart. So accurate were these charts that many were still in use, albeit with later amendments, for a century. Most have been superseded by charts made from more accurate surveying methods.[11]

An extensive report, prepared for the Admiralty in 1859 by Captain Drury and Captain Stokes, was published in the following edition of the "New Zealand Pilot": [12]

"The entrance to the Avon and Heathcote Rivers lies at the south extreme of the sandy beach of Pegasus Bay and is only two and a half miles north-west of Godley Head, the north entrance point of Port Cooper (Lyttelton).

As a means of conveying cargo between Lyttelton and the plains it is of great importance to the Canterbury settlement and in moderate weather is accessible to vessels drawing eight to 10 feet of water. The bar is one sixth of a mile outside the rocks showing above water at high tide at the southern entrance point and is 400 feet in width. It is composed of fine sand and has a depth in the channel of not less than five feet at low water (springs), shoaling gradually from either side.

The entrance of the rivers lies at first in a southerly direction and when a quarter of a mile inside the bar it bends rather suddenly to the westward. The narrowest part of the channel, which is at the elbow, is 150 feet wide, but on passing it where a vessel would turn there is a space of 400 feet – with no less than nine feet at low water, and in the channel between here and Shag Rock 10 or 11 feet.

The Avon and Heathcote Rivers rise in the swamps in the plains and, being unconnected with the mountain ranges, are less liable to changes from sudden and rapid floods. The greatest strength of current does not exceed five to six knots. The highest water on the bar would be 12 feet at springs and nine to 10 feet at neaps, the range of tide being from seven feet to five feet.

By taking advantage of moderate weather, which can always be judged before leaving Lyttelton, the bar may be crossed without risk or loss or damage to cargo in a decked vessel of the draught before mentioned. But the most suitable description of craft would be a short paddle-wheel steamer; indeed such a vessel is a necessary adjunct to the prosperity of the settlement.

The greatest difficulty of this river appears to be getting out and the danger of being set through the rocks at the entrance (ebb tide), but it is found that by keeping close to the north spit a vessel will be set clear of them and out into the channel.

It would of course be an advantage for a person navigating the river to have local knowledge of the entrance, and doubtless leading marks will be erected and a pilot established without delay [it was actually ten years before a pilot was appointed]. Under favourable circumstances, the bar may be crossed by open boats with perfect safety."

The Day family, who had had first-hand experience in sailing across the Bar, disagreed about the use of open boats. They considered that the use of such boats was foolhardy in even the most favourable conditions. Later mishaps were to prove them correct.

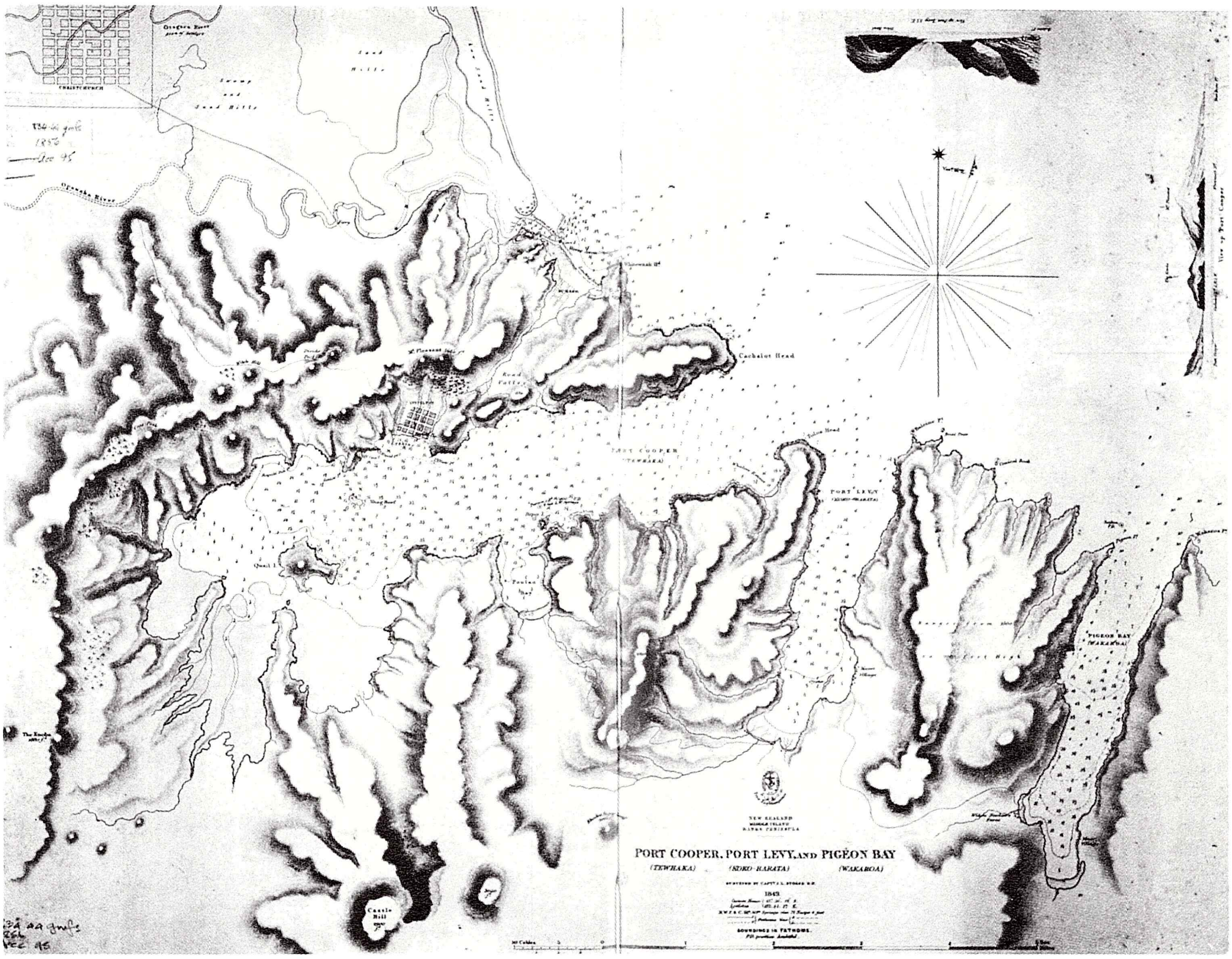


Chart of Port Cooper, Port Levy and Pigeon Bay, 1856

preparations for a colony

When Captain Joseph Thomas arrived at Lyttelton aboard the *Fly* at Christmas 1848, with surveyors Torlesse, Jollie, Cass and staff, he had exactly two years to lay out the towns of the Canterbury settlement. Thomas was well aware of the need to site his main town near a deep water port. By siting his port at Rapaki and reclaiming all the tidal flats beyond Quail Island, he chose to locate the chief town at Teddington. Road access to the plains was to be on the alignment of the present Rapaki Track.

Although the Maoris had been agreeable to sell land to the Canterbury Association they were understandably reluctant to part with the land at Rapaki where they had their settlement. As a consequence, the site of the port was shifted further down the harbour to its present site at Lyttelton and the road to the plains was started along the Evans Pass alignment.

Thomas soon realised that his proposed town at Teddington would have very limited scope for expansion because of the high surrounding hills.

By transferring the town to the plains he was very conscious of the transport problems this would create. In fact, of all the problems to be experienced by the early settlers, the cartage of goods from Lyttelton to Christchurch was to be the most serious. Confronted by a swampy wasteland interlaced with small streams, Thomas faced a dilemma as to the exact location of the town.

Over the years there has been much criticism of the siting of Christchurch. In choosing this location, however, Thomas took many factors into account, not the least of which was transport. Faced with swampy ground and no early prospect of roads he had to consider the only means of transport available at that time — the river. He noted that the Deans brothers had been successful in navigating the river and landing their goods at the Bricks, near the present Barbadoes Street Bridge, and he sited his town centre close to this point. Had he sited the town several miles to the west on higher and drier ground, there would have been no immediate prospect of providing transport to it.

With little prospect of building roads in the near future the Canterbury Association seriously considered the building of a series of canals. Many parts of the existing streams would be used and canals built to straighten out the many meanders and join the rivers. Old maps of Christchurch show several of the canal reserves around the City. Goods would be transported from Lyttelton over the Sumner Road as far as the Estuary. From that point a system of canals would carry it anywhere in the area between the Waimakariri and the Selwyn Rivers.

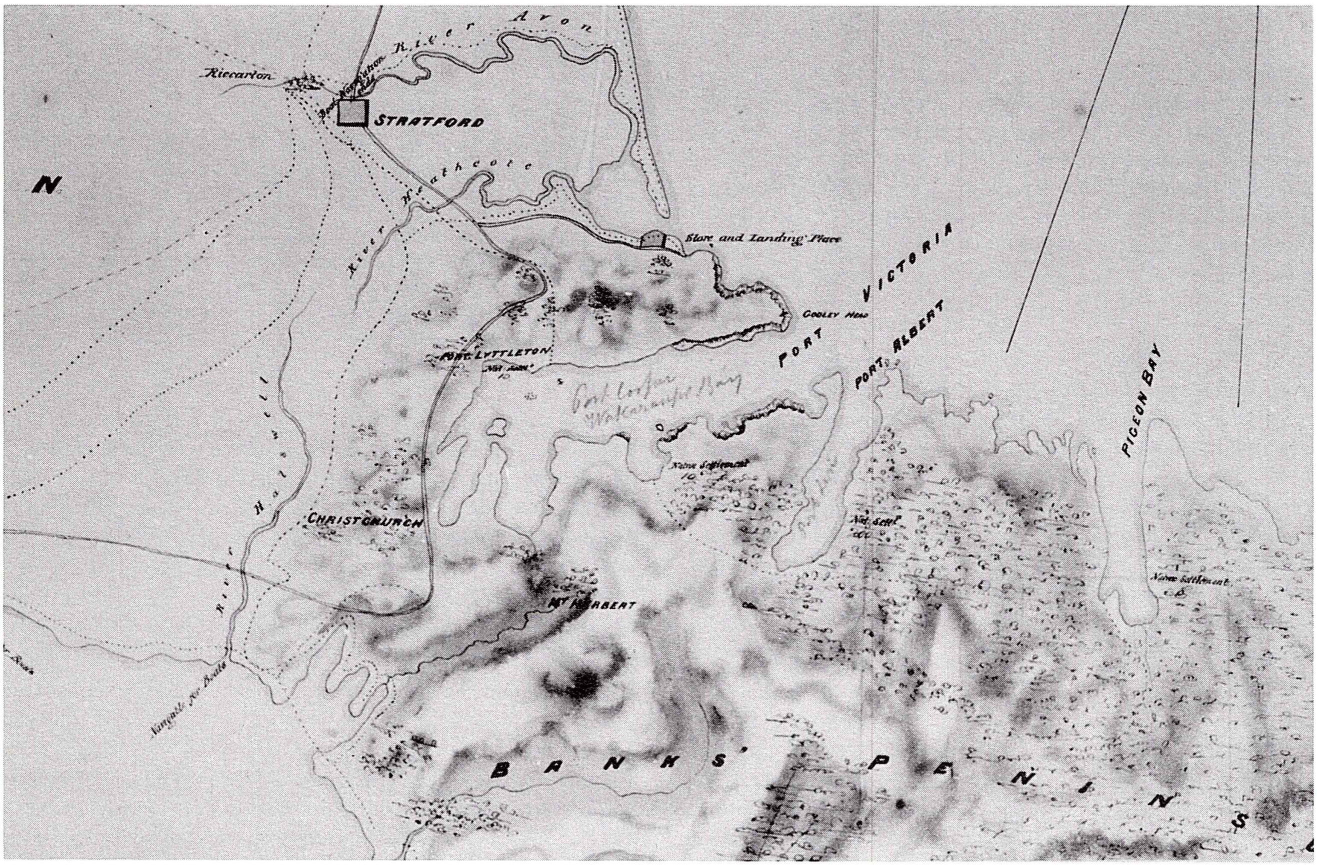
The first canal would link the Estuary and the Avon River, bypassing the shallow, swampy lower reaches of the river. This canal would have traversed the length of Linwood Avenue, which many older Christchurch residents still refer to as Canal Reserve. Another canal was planned along Marshland Road, also referred to as Canal Reserve on early maps. This would link the Avon River with the Styx River. A further canal was planned to link the Heathcote River with the Halswell River.

Although the Canterbury Association planned these canals it did not have sufficient money to construct them. When the affairs of the Association were transferred to the Provincial Government in 1852, the canal reserves were retained, but no progress was made on their construction.[13] Anticipation of the canals had led to some early settlement in the Linwood and Richmond districts but these settlers were doomed to disappointment when the canals were not built.

The Provincial Government appointed a commission to investigate the practicability of canals in 1858. It was hoped that, by this means, cheap inland transport could be provided throughout the province. The commission consulted the Provincial Engineer, Edward Dobson. By this time however, many railway proposals were being considered and, with the opening of the railway to Lyttelton, in 1867, all thought of canals disappeared for the time being. [For information on the planning and construction of the railways in Canterbury, see volume 5.]

Canal proposals were again put forward from the turn of the century in the various schemes for Port Christchurch, which is discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

The use of canals for cheap inland transport was once again advocated by a well-known Christchurch citizen, Mr L C Walker, in a series of letters to local newspapers in the 1950s. He always left his readers somewhat vague about the uses to which he would put these canals.



An enlargement of part of a map by J Thomas, Chief Surveyor, Canterbury Association 1849.
This interesting map shows the first proposals for the Canterbury settlement. Christchurch, the chief town of the settlement, is located at the head of the harbour at Teddington and the port of Lyttelton is sited much further up the harbour. The road linking the port and the small town of Stratford on the plains, crosses the hills on the approximate alignment of the Rapaki Track. Note also the store and landing place at Sumner, joined by road to the settlements on the plains.
Courtesy Canterbury Museum.

building begins

Having laid out the town and its streets and started the building of the road to Sumner [see volume 1] Thomas set about the construction of a jetty and barracks at Lyttelton to be ready for the arrival of the first settlers in December 1850. His nearest supply of timber was in the bays of Banks Peninsula and his only means of transporting it was by sea.

It was Charles Crawford, with his whaleboat, who ran the first commercial shipping service. He won a contract from Captain Thomas to transport timber from the Peninsula and build a 40 x 21 feet store at the Sumner end of the proposed road from Lyttelton. This entailed crossing the Bar with a loaded boat.

In 1848 George Day, with his 12 ton ketch *Flirt*, also entered into the maritime trade at Lyttelton. He was firm in his convictions that it was unwise to use an open boat over the Bar. *Flirt* was the first fully decked vessel to enter the Estuary. One of his first jobs was to transport totara logs from Pigeon Bay for the piles of the first jetty in Lyttelton. In those busy days before the arrival of the settlers, both Day and Crawford were kept busy transporting cargo around the harbour, the Peninsula bays and Sumner.[14]

After all this feverish activity everything was nearly ready for the arrival of the first settlers. The immigration barracks and the jetty at Lyttelton were finished, as was the store at Sumner. The one vital link which was missing was the Sumner Road. Although work had started in plenty of time, construction had ground to a halt when all available funds had been spent. It was to be 1857 before the road was completed. [15] The vexed question of transport to Christchurch had not been solved before the arrival of the settlers and, in terms of the loss of possessions, became a greater hardship for many than the voyage from the other side of the world. It proved to be almost as costly.

the early settlers

The first settlers on the Canterbury Plains were the Maoris of the moa hunter period 750 - 1450 AD. There were many camps set up along the clean, open beaches around Christchurch, usually close to the river mouths to obtain fresh water. Because of the instability of the river mouths, with their changing channels, few of these old camp sites remain.

Some more permanent sites still exist around the Estuary, where fish were abundant. The best known are at Moa Bone Cave, Redcliffs, and the cave at Moncks Bay. Evidence from the few moa-hunters' sites that remain, show that there was an extensive coastal trade between the various tribes around the country and that most of this trade must have been carried out by sea. When one considers the successful Maori migrations across the Pacific Ocean, it is little wonder that the Maoris had a successful system of sea transport.

When it came to cross-country journeys to the West Coast to obtain greenstone, however, the Maori had to resort to foot as the shallow, braided, strong-flowing Canterbury rivers were not suitable for their canoes.

When the moa became depleted the Maoris moved off into the Peninsula bays where their diet could be augmented by shellfish, fernroot and birds. Nearby Lake Ellesmere provided them with an abundance of wild fowl and eels.

The first European settlers on the Canterbury plains were farmers, led by James Heriot. They arrived in the ship *Sarah and Elizabeth* at Goashore, and established their farm at Putaringamotu, near Riccarton Bush. Some of the party returned to Sydney, but one, Malcolm McKinnon, remained and worked the farm for 18 months. It was his intention to grow fresh vegetables and to supply these to ships trading around the coast.

Lack of suitable transport was to be the downfall of this venture. Disillusioned, McKinnon buried his plough in the river bank and moved to the French settlement of Akaroa in March 1841.

During the next decade European settlers arrived in a spasmodic fashion. In all there were about 1,000 settlers scattered throughout the province, with the bulk of these living in the bays of Banks Peninsula.

Early trade, as we have seen, consisted of transporting the products of the whaling stations to the outside world. One of the earliest ships trading on the Canterbury coast was the barque *Vittoria*. In 1830 her master tried unsuccessfully to sail up the Waimakariri River to the Kaiapohia Pa to trade for flax. The *Vittoria* eventually put into Port Cooper (Lyttelton) and anchored in Purau Bay. The Maoris from Kaiapohia carried the flax over hill and plain to Rapaki and then by boat across the harbour to the waiting ship.[16]

the Deans

To the Deans brothers must go the honour of being the first settlers to cross the Sumner Bar and use the Avon River as a transport artery. The elder brother, William, had tried unsuccessfully to farm around Wellington since 1840 but problems associated with land ownership meant that he never really got started. With Captain Daniels, he sailed down the east coast of the South Island before deciding to make his home on the Port Cooper (Canterbury) Plains. His younger brother, John, had originally landed at Nelson and, not finding the land to his liking, agreed to join his brother.[17]

On February 11, 1843 the schooner *Richmond* sailed from Wellington with the Deans, Gebbies and Manson families on board, bound for a new life on the vast plains. The families were landed at Port Levy, where the women and children stayed while the men travelled to the land chosen by William Deans for his new farm. The farm was to cover a large area of the former Riccarton Borough with the homestead at the site of the present Deans Bush. The district was originally known as Putaringamotu, but the brothers renamed it Riccarton after the parish they came from in Scotland. The river they named Avon, after the Ayrshire stream in their home town.[18] The journey from Port Levy to Riccarton was made by whaleboat up the Avon.

The brothers set to work to fell trees and build accommodation for their families. All the supplies had to be brought over the Sumner Bar and up the Avon. The whaleboat, carrying about four tons, could only reach a point near the present Barbadoes Street Bridge. All goods were landed there before being carried further upstream by canoe to Washbourn Creek, a site in the present Botanic Gardens beyond the hospital. Further upstream the river was too shallow for any craft and the goods had to be barrowed or carried to the homestead site.

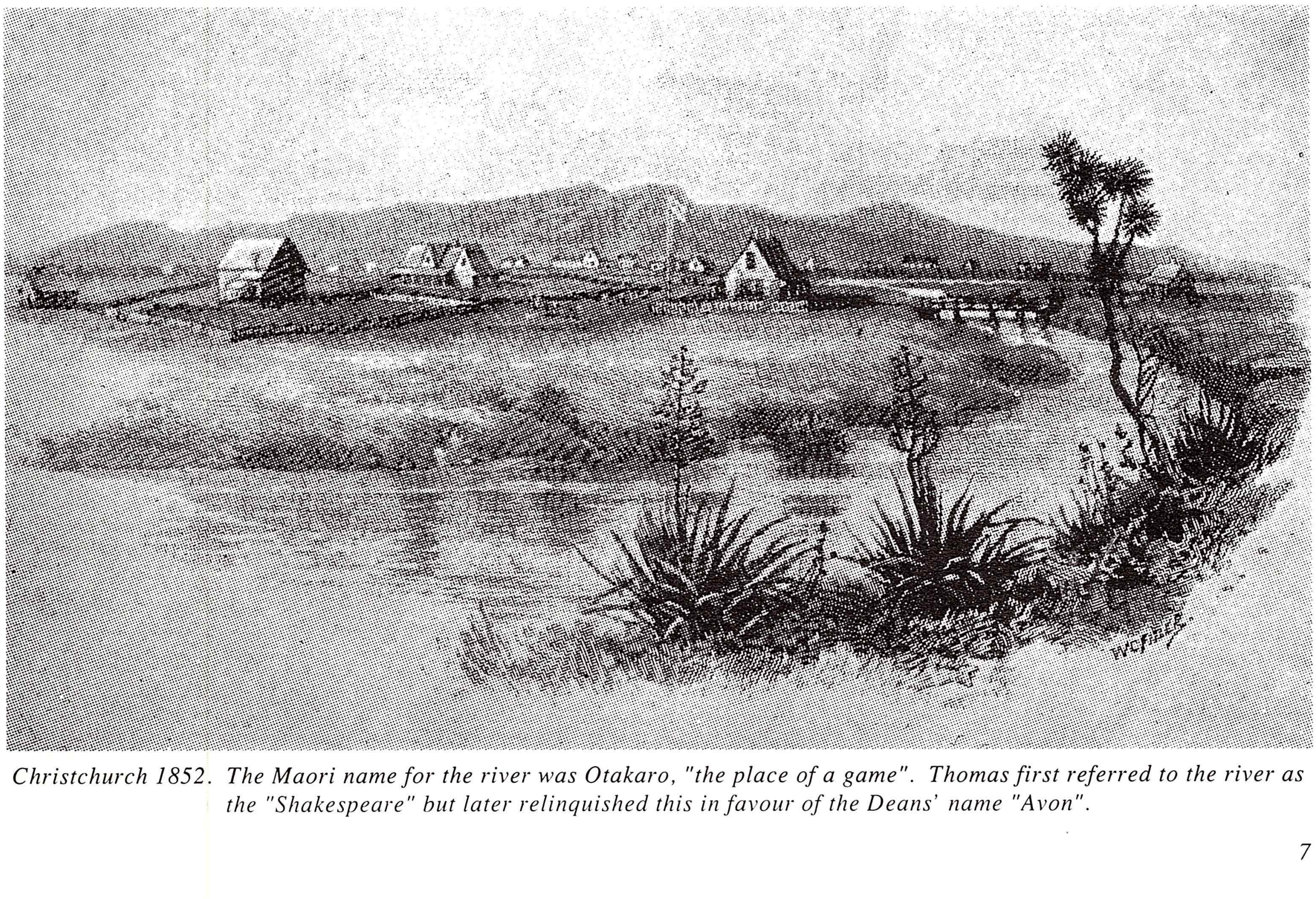
The Deans' farm at Riccarton, the first homestead to be built on the Canterbury Plains.

As bricks formed a large part of the early cargo to be carried upstream to the Barbadoes Street site, the place where they were unloaded consequently became known as the Bricks. This was the upper limit of the Avon which could be reached by whaleboat. As traffic on the river increased a wharf was built and for a time this was the main port for early Christchurch. The site of the old Bricks Wharf has been marked by a memorial, erected in 1926, and contains some of the original bricks landed on the site.

With simple accommodation completed in May 1843, the Deans families were shifted in from Port Levy. The women and children, with their belongings were brought up the river as far as possible by canoe and from there the children were carried on their fathers' shoulders while the women walked, carrying as many of their possessions as possible. In answer to complaints about the hardships of the trip, John Deans prophesied that in the near future roads and railways would run in all directions.

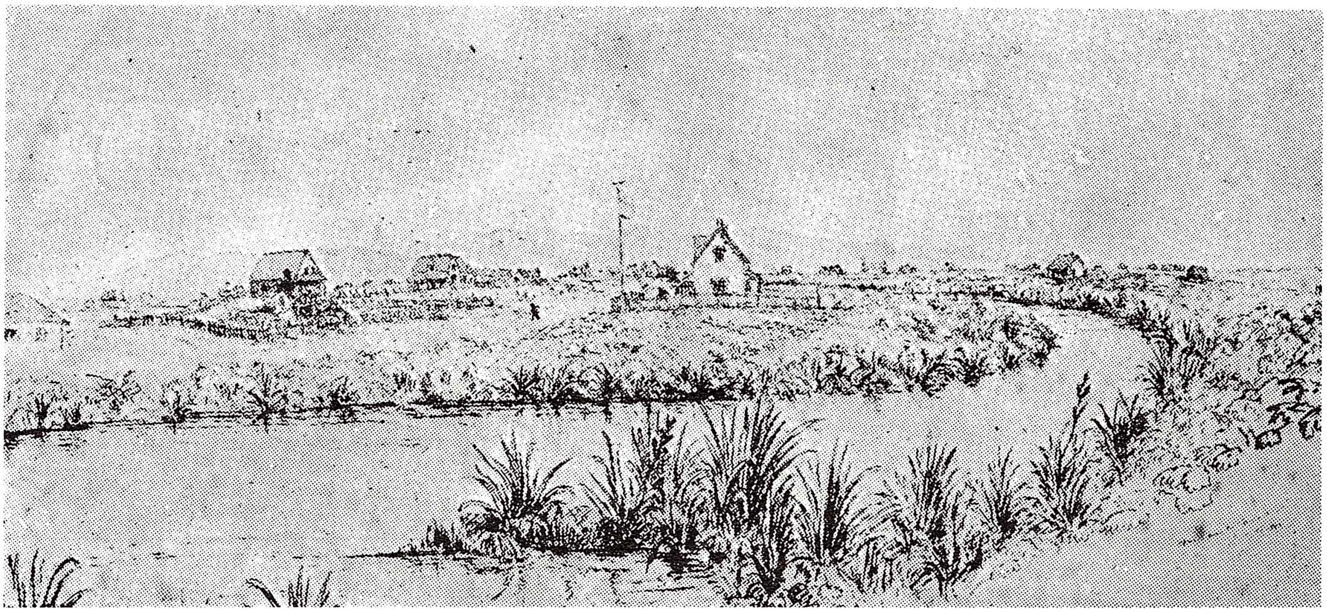
Until such time as this prophecy came true, the only means of transport was to be their faithful whaleboat, except in unsuitable weather, when walking was the only alternative.

The boat, propelled by four rowers and a sail, made regular trips down the Avon and across the Sumner Bar taking out the



Christchurch 1852. The Maori name for the river was Otakaro, "the place of a game". Thomas first referred to the river as the "Shakespeare" but later relinquished this in favour of the Deans' name "Avon".

farm produce and bringing back supplies and mail. Although they soon learned when it was safe to cross the Bar, such crossings were not without their mishaps. In May 1845, their boat was hit by a sudden north-west squall as it crossed the Bar and capsized. Fortunately all aboard managed to swim ashore and spent a cold, hungry night in a cave. There was no way that stock could be transported by boat and when stock arrived at Lyttelton from New South Wales, they had to be driven over the hills and through the swamp to Riccarton.



A sketch of early Christchurch, July 1852, showing the meandering stream of the Avon. Through the town centre the river was only navigable for small canoes and heavy cargoes had to be unloaded downstream at the Bricks Wharf.

the Greenwoods and the Rhodes

The first white settlers in Lyttelton Harbour were the Greenwood brothers who chose to build their home and farm in the sheltered bay at Purau in 1843. The Greenwoods had the doubtful distinction of being the victims of the first armed robbery in Canterbury. On the night of June 27, 1846 the family was visited by three Australian ex-convicts known as the "Blue Cap" gang. While two of the brothers were bound, the other was forced to carry money and valuables to a waiting boat. After the departure of the robbers he was able to release his brothers.

Believing that the gang were headed for the Deans' farm at Riccarton, the Greenwoods took a message to Port Levy.

A party of whalers set out from Port Levy to row around Godley Head and up the Avon to warn the Deans family. Fortunately, the expected attack did not take place and the fate of the robbers is not recorded. Perhaps unnerved by this experience, the Greenwoods sold out to the Rhodes brothers in 1847.[19]

The farm at Purau prospered under the Rhodes brothers' management. They obtained a contract to supply meat and other produce to the workers on the various projects for the Canterbury Association around the harbour. With the arrival of the settlers in December 1850, this trade expanded significantly and a large warehouse was soon required to store wool, meat and other farm produce.

Delivery of all this produce led to the establishment of the first ferry service in Lyttelton Harbour in September1851. [Details of this service will be found in a later chapter].

the beginning of the Canterbury Settlement

The beginning of the Canterbury Association's planned settlement of Christchurch was marked by the arrival of the *Charlotte Jane* and the *Randolph* in Lyttelton on December 16, 1850. They were followed by the *Sir George Seymour* (December 17) and the *Cressy* (December 27), thus completing the voyages of the "First Four Ships".

the Bridle Path

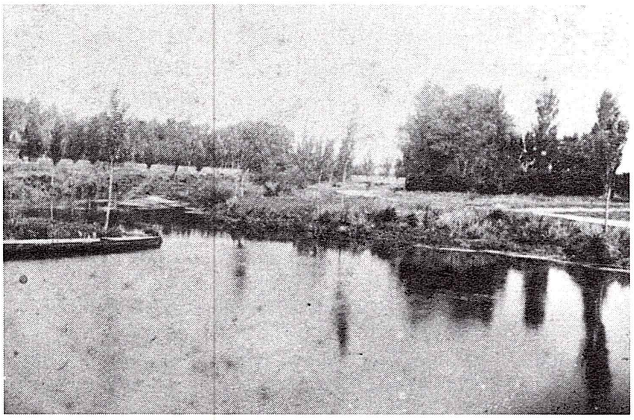
When the early settlers climbed to the top of the Bridle Path they were so dismayed at their first view of the swamp which was to become their home that some booked a return passage to England.

Many suggestions were put forward about how goods could be taken over the Bridle Path. Although carts hauled by bullocks could make the crossing, this method was not practical to handle all the goods offering. Perhaps the most novel suggestion was the installation of a huge flying fox, with a windlass at the top propelled by oxen, to lift heavy goods over the hill. Fortunately, this idea was never proceeded with. Until the coming of roads and railways the Bridle Path was to remain the principal route between port and town.

Each year, on the Sunday nearest to Canterbury's Anniversary Day (December 16) many people walk over the Bridle Path in remembrance of the early pioneers.

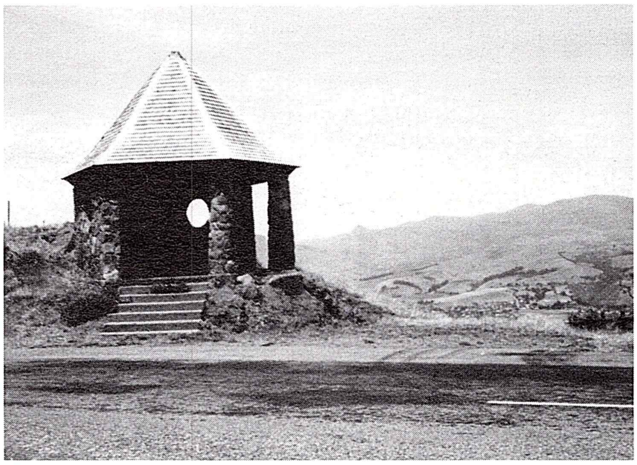
sea transport commences

The transport of the settlers' goods by sea got off to a bad start. Strong north-easterly winds prevented small craft from leaving the shelter of Lyttelton Harbour. In fact George Day's *Flirt* was the only vessel to reach Sumner before the end of December. *Flirt* made three more trips to Sumner in the next ten days, assisted by the 12 ton *Katherine Johnstone*. The Canterbury Association chartered the *Fanny* and the 24 ton *Phoebe* to speed up the operation. In all, ten vessels, including punts and whaleboats plied for the trade, some running to Sumner and some making the passage to the Bricks Wharf in the Avon.



An early photograph of the Bricks Wharf. The surrounding area became an important commercial centre until roads were built to open up the town centre.
Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

Settlers arriving on these ships were greatly impressed by their first view of the colony. Here they were, anchored in a fine, sheltered harbour, whilst onshore the new town of Lyttelton looked neat and inviting. They little knew that their troubles were just beginning. The chief of these was the transport of their possessions to Christchurch. The Bridle Path, with an average grade of 1 in 5, was suitable only for light loads. The alternative was by sea.



The memorial at the top of the Bridle Path as it appears in 1990. The inscription reads: "On this spot the Pioneer Women of Canterbury and their families rested after their climb from the Port of Lyttelton and gazed with awe but with courage upon the hills and plains of Canterbury where they were to make their home."
Photograph: Les Dew.

Freight charges were 30/– per ton and a boat could be chartered for £8. The settlers were astounded at the charges which were, in some cases, about half the cost of transporting their possessions from England. In addition the risks to life and property were great and many people lost all their possessions when vessels were swamped on the Bar. [20]

The experiences of Dr A C Barker, who arrived on the *Charlotte Jane*, are perhaps typical of the problems faced by many of the settlers. From the top of the Port Hills he viewed his new home. Like many of the early settlers, he was somewhat dismayed by the sight of a dreary, swampy plain with meandering, marshy streams. He was certainly aware of the problems he would face in transporting his belongings to Christchurch. After a visit to the Deans family at Riccarton, Dr Barker chose his town section on the corner of Worcester Street and Oxford Terrace, the site of the present Noahs Hotel.

Returning to Lyttelton, he engaged a boatman to convey his possessions to the site of his new home. Rough seas prevented the boat from leaving Lyttelton Harbour. The next attempt was a little more successful. The boat reached Sumner but, when the boatman found the Bar impassable, he landed the goods on the open, rocky shore some miles away from the nearest dwellings. After a search the doctor eventually found his possessions, damaged but fortunately still usesable. With great difficulty he arranged for them to be picked up and transported as far as the Bricks. At that time there was no adequate landing place at the Bricks, so the goods had to sit on the swampy river bank until arrangements could be made to carry them to the doctor's home site two miles away.[21]

On February 8, 1851, Samuel Taylor, master of the *George and Henry*, advertised in the "Lyttelton Times" that he would carry freight from Lyttelton to the Bricks at 30/– a ton.[22] It was this ability to ship cargo to the Bricks which influenced the early choice of sections in the new town. In addition, Christchurch's first industries were established close to the Bricks Wharf, which was built in 1851. These were Anderson's forge, Thacker's timber yard and a nursery established by William "Cabbage" Wilson, who was to become Christchurch's first Mayor, and who supplied vegetables and plants to the early settlers from this nursery. It was only after the formation of roads that the sections in the heart of the town, fronting Cathedral Square and High Street, became popular.

At that time the Avon was not the river we know today. It flowed sluggishly across the plain, its indefinite outline marked by toetoe and flax with scattered stands of cabbage trees. There was very little shelter along the river from the severe winds which swept the plains. In 1851 the channel of the Avon was marked by stakes through the Estuary to assist navigation. As the channel shifted with each flood the markers often had to be re-located.

Incoming ships at Lyttelton anchored at four distinct places in the harbour according to their size and purpose. The larger passenger vessels anchored well down the harbour and out of sight of the town. The first jetty of 270 feet in length was only suitable for small ships with light cargoes. The heavy presses for the "Lyttelton Times" had to come ashore on lighters and livestock had to swim ashore.

One would have thought it more convenient to have Christchurch settlers' luggage loaded directly onto lighters at the ships' side for direct transport up the Avon. This was not the case, however, as all goods had to be landed in Lyttelton for sorting before being re-loaded for the final leg of the journey. There was little storage space in the port and when several ships arrived together, cargo waiting to be cleared had to be left in the open and was subject to storm damage. At busy times the lightering service was stretched to the limit and it could be one or two months before all the cargo was unloaded. This was a bonus for the incoming passengers who were allowed to stay on board until their luggage and goods, often furniture, were unloaded.[23]

After the arrival of the First Four Ships, sea trade between port and town was to increase dramatically. Within one year 14 ships had brought a further 1,650 settlers to Lyttelton. Although it made many trips across the Bar, Crawford's undecked whaleboat was less reliable in this trade than a covered vessel like the *Flirt* and many settlers lost all their possessions when it was swamped on the Bar. In 1854, H B Gresson, a solicitor and later a judge, lost a complete law library as well as all his household items in this manner. Unfortunately his marine insurance only covered the voyage from England to Lyttelton and did not cover the trip across the Bar.

However, trade from incoming ships was somewhat irregular and Day's *Flirt* was soon engaged in a more regular and lucrative trade, plying between the Peninsula bays, Lyttelton, Sumner, the Estuary, Kaiapoi, Saltwater Creek and Motunau. Typical of his cargoes was a load of 300 fence posts from the Peninsula for John Monck of Moncks Bay.

A somewhat irregular service was carried on by A J Alport, a merchant, until the firm of Longden and LeCren entered the trade in May 1851 with the *Hawk*, and provided a good service to the Bricks – at least until the following month, when the *Hawk* was wrecked on the Sumner Bar and battered to pieces. Longden and LeCren carried on the service by using a 17 ton decked cutter *Kaka*, owned by Captain Henry Cain.[24]

Small craft, whose owners did not wish to risk them on the Bar, would be run up on the sandy beach at the Scarborough end of Sumner Bay, a location known to the men of the *Acheron* and *Pandora* as the Landing Place. These vessels would be run ashore at high tide and rest on the beach while cargo was unloaded over a plank. They would then float off at the next high tide. The more suitable vessels which did cross the Bar found themselves in a 1,000 acre tidal estuary where they could anchor in the sheltered Clifton Bay or proceed up the Avon and Heathcote Rivers. Only at low tide were the winding river channels visible in acres of mud.

Although it was the Avon which was the first traffic artery in the new settlement, it was the Heathcote which was to play the most significant part in the development of the new industries in the town. The Avon was narrow and winding, thus restricting the size of the vessels which could sail up to the town. The Heathcote, however, was wider, deeper and its tidal waters enabled ships to carry sizeable cargoes close to the town.

The Heathcote was tidal for eight miles from the Heathcote Bridge and could be navigated by small craft up to Wilsons (or Crawfords) Bridge. In practice few vessels sailed further upstream than the wharf at the site of the present Radley Bridge. Before the completion of the railway, a considerable amount of cargo made its way along the Heathcote to the many wharves established along the riverside.

Navigating the early sailing ships up the Heathcote was a difficult task. Upstream from the Heathcote Ferry the river changed course many times, doubling back on itself at several points. In fact, one stretch of the lower reaches of the river was known as the Devil's Elbow, or Humbug Reach, because sailing ships finding a favourable wind on one reach could be assured of a foul wind on the next reach. It became necessary to tow ships through the lower reaches of the Heathcote. Mr Noble Stace, who lived in a sod hut near the ferry, provided this service, first with bullocks and later with horses. Some stretches of the river bank were so swampy that animals could not be used and ships were often towed by their own rowing boats.[25]

This lower part of the Heathcote, in conjunction with Ferry Road, soon became the first main artery of the Canterbury settlement, with freight and passengers moving along in a constant stream. Land on Ferry Road, with a frontage to the Heathcote River fetched a high price and was soon taken up. By 1856, the riverside land presented a prosperous air of farms and factories.

The majority of the cargo up the Heathcote was timber, shipped to the various wharves, from Banks Peninsula, Picton, Wellington, Porirua and Onehunga. Imported timber from North America and Tasmania was trans-shipped at Lyttelton and also came up the river. So important was the timber trade in building the new settlement that in March 1863, ten vessels entered the river carrying 171,000 super-feet of timber between them. During the building boom of the 1860s and 1870s it was estimated that eight million super-feet of timber passed up the Heathcote and along Ferry Road annually.[26] In July 1874, one million super-feet of timber was unloaded in one week.

The development of the Heathcote as a major traffic artery influenced the early pattern of the industrial development of Christchurch. The town's early industries were clustered around the many wharves established along the river banks. By 1874 eight wool scours, seven tanneries, a soap and candle factory, several glue factories and leather manufacturing factories were established in the Woolston area. Many of these industries remain today. In addition, there were lime kilns, brick works and timber yards catering for the early building industry.

Outward cargo also played an important part in the river traffic, with farm produce being shipped to Lyttelton for trans-shipping to larger ships for export.

Traffic on the Heathcote was always heavy. It is believed that the record was set on November 14, 1866, when 15 vessels sailed from the river. Nine were bound for Lyttelton, three for Pigeon Bay and three for Mackintosh Bay.[27]

Sailings did not always go smoothly, however. For example, in March 1858, two schooners left the Heathcote bound for Wellington. The *Port Glascow* was wrecked on the Kaikoura Coast. The *Ocean Queen* was lost for two months. It was not until it had arrived in Wellington that it was learned that the vessel had been blown eastward in a storm, actually reaching the Chatham Islands.[28]

Passenger traffic on the Heathcote does not appear to have reached the same proportions as it did on the Avon. There is, however, reference to parishioners of St. John's Church, Woolston, rowing down the river to attend services.[29]

As the roads and railways spread through the district the influence of the river waned. It could be expected that the Woolston industrial area would have faded and died. However, the railway, first to Ferrymead and later to Lyttelton, was built through the heart of Woolston close to the river. Many factory owners found this new transport artery was just as conveniently located to their needs as the river. Although some factories were re-located in Sydenham, many stayed in Woolston, which remains one of the main industrial areas of Christchurch to the present day.

keeping a watchful eye

Major Hornbrook

Major Alfred Hornbrook will always be remembered by the road on Mount Pleasant which bears his name. But how many people who use the road today know anything of this early pioneer? In December 1849 he opened the "Mitre Hotel" in Lyttelton. Although the name conjures up visions of a grand establishment, contemporary sources suggest that it was, in fact, little more than a "grog shop". It was, however, Canterbury's first pub, and possibly the first commercial business in the province. Hornbrook's publican's licence was granted on the condition that his hotel would be completed before the arrival of the ships carrying the first settlers. At first the hotel also contained a general store and a bakery. John Robert Godley, one of the founders of the Canterbury Association, freshly arrived from England, wrote in glowing terms of his first dinner at the Mitre. This must have seemed a veritable feast after weeks of shipboard fare.

Major Hornbrook then took up farming and bought several blocks on the north side of Mount Pleasant overlooking the Estuary. By 1858 he had 5,000 acres and ran 2,000 sheep. His homestead and farm buildings were located at the present junction of the Summit Road and Mount Pleasant Road. To get his wool to market he could either sledge it down a three mile spur to the ferry across the Heathcote, or carry it up the steep slope above Lyttelton from where it would be rolled down hill to the port, using convenient bushes to keep it more or less under control. Later a track was formed from his farm to the port.

It was his next exploit which really earns him a place in this book. From his home high on the hills he could command an excellent view up the east coast and would spot vessels bound for Lyttelton. As soon as he saw a vessel about to enter the heads he would cross the rim of the hills to a point above Lyttelton and there signal the port authorities of the approaching ship. This position of honorary signalman was a purely voluntary effort on his part.

However, a public subscription was taken up in 1853 to supply him with a telescope, a flagstaff and a set of flags. The signals used were: white for a cutter, blue for a brig and white and red for a barque. Hornbrook continued this service until 1868, when a look-out post was established at Adderley Head.[30]

Adderley Head and Little Port Cooper

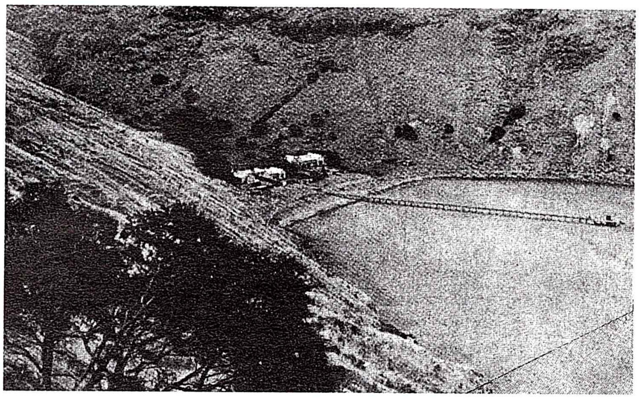
After Hornbrook's service, a look-out station was established at Adderley Head in 1868 and three signalmen were appointed. This headland separates Lyttelton Harbour from Port Levy and was originally known as Common Head. It commanded a good view, both up and down the coast, for spotting approaching vessels. This look-out point was run in conjunction with the pilot station at Little Port Cooper, which is the first bay inside the heads.

Known as Whalers Retreat, it was a convenient bay for trying out, and it was also a handy refuge in a storm. It was not without its problems though, because of the uncertainty of winds or sudden lulls in the prevailing winds. On several occasions, ships were carried onto the rocks. Fortunately, most of these vessels suffered little damage and were floated off on the next high tide.

For a time Little Port Cooper was the home of the Deal Boatmen of Kent whose job it had once been to rescue sailors whose ships had been trapped on the Goodwin Sands near the mouth of the Thames Estuary. After emigrating to Canterbury they continued their rescue work at Little Port Cooper. By 1859, navigation had become safer and, in May of that year, they went south to Timaru to operate the landing service there.[31]

As early as 1860, the Provincial Government had voted £100 for a look-out and beacon on Adderley Head and £300 for a pilot boat. The two tenders received were both rejected because the price was too high. Money continued to be placed on the estimates in the following years, but it was 1868 before the station was established on the east side of the bay. This original site was exposed to the elements and the buildings were in danger from rocks rolling down the steep hillsides. Because of this, the station was shifted to the head of the bay in 1875 as this was a much safer location. In 1874 a lifeboat was purchased from England at a cost of £75. It was shipped to the colony aboard the *Ballochmyle*, which is believed to be the first vessel to berth at Gladstone Pier in Lyttelton.

On March 7, 1874, the 20 ton schooner *Randolph*, loaded with firewood, was lying becalmed a quarter of a mile off the Pilot Station. Suddenly a squall struck, capsizing and sinking her. At that time the pilot boat was away and the three unfortunate crewmen had to battle the storm for two hours before they could reach the nearby shore.



The tiny settlement of Little Port Cooper in 1949. This bay was originally known as Simeon Bay in honour of J Simeon MP, a member of the Canterbury Association.
Photograph: Christchurch Press.

In 1876, a telegraph connection was established between Adderley Head and the pilot station at Little Port Cooper. By the early 1880s a telephone line, including an underwater cable, linked Little Port Cooper and Adderley Head with Godley Head and Christchurch. Pilots would meet incoming ships and take them up to Lyttelton, returning home to Little Port Cooper when they were required to pilot outgoing ships. The newly established Lyttelton Harbour Board took over the pilot service in 1877. The pilot station at Little Port Cooper was closed in 1885 and the pilots were transferred to Lyttelton. Three signalmen continued to be stationed on Adderley Head and reported the approach of vessels direct to Lyttelton. From that time all pilots worked from Lyttelton, travelling in the tug to meet incoming ships.

The population of the isolated bay at Little Port Cooper rose to 19 in 1878 but by 1911 it had fallen to 11. Today the bay is uninhabited but is still a favourite spot for yachtsmen.

the Sumner Pilot

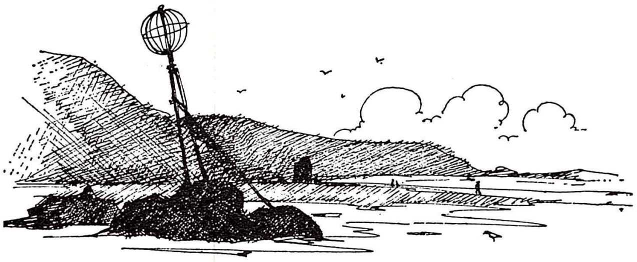
As the population of Christchurch increased, so did the number of small vessels working the Bar. Between 1850 and the opening of the railway tunnel in 1867, it is estimated that close to 250 vessels were used in this trade. They varied in size from 10 to 120 tons and, because of the tide limitations, the maximum draught was 7 feet 6 inches. More than 30 vessels were wrecked on the Bar and many more were stranded temporarily. Added to this was the inconvenience caused by vessels waiting for favourable tides and weather before crossing the Bar, and the considerable time this cost.

Apart from marking the channels of the Avon (1851) and the Heathcote (1856) where they ran through the Estuary, the Provincial Government had done nothing to assist the navigation of vessels in this treacherous location, preferring to think of the Bar as an inconvenience rather than a danger. George Day, who operated an accommodation house near the beach, acted as an honorary signalman to guide skippers who were unaware of the local conditions.

The sea trade between Lyttelton and Christchurch had become so extensive, it was estimated that in 1860 alone, £700,000 worth of goods crossed the Bar. In July 1863, a local ship owner, George Buckley, protested to the Provincial Government, pointing out that £20,000 worth of goods had crossed the Bar in a week, four vessels had lost their cargoes and two had been wrecked.

Buckley's protest had the desired effect. A signal mast was erected on the top of Cave Rock in September 1864 and first used on December 12, 1864. Signal flags showed the state of the tide and the Bar. An iron beacon was erected on Beacon Rock, the outermost rock north-west of Cave Rock, and £500 was spent on providing a pilot boat and signals.[32]

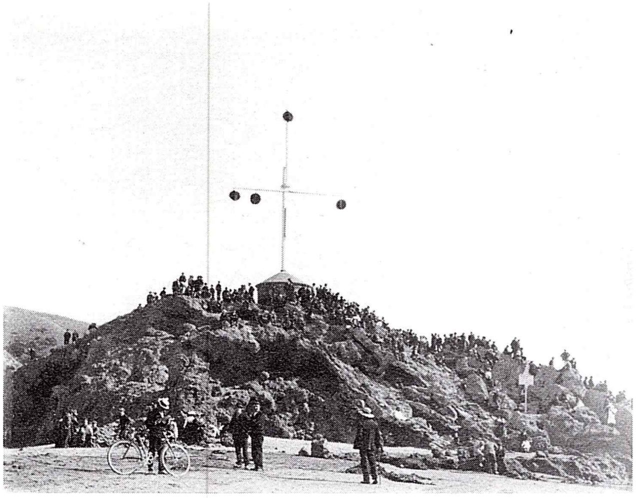
The Beacon Rock beacon remained until 1948 although shifting sand and channels meant that it had been high and dry since 1929.



Beacon Rock, near Cave Rock. *Courtesy W. De Thier.*

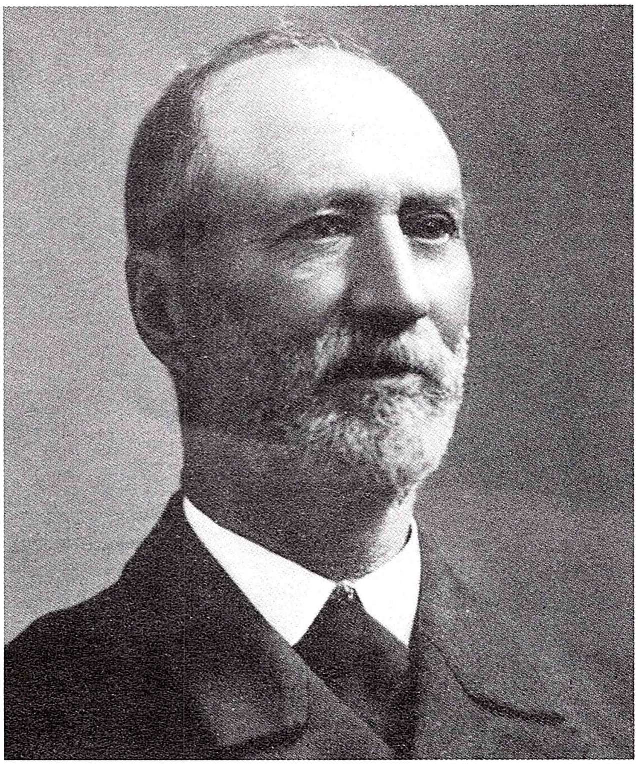
At the same time W H Turner was appointed pilot for the Bar and the Heathcote River. One of his first jobs was to install suitable moorings in the relative shelter of Sumner Bay so that ships waiting to cross the Bar could tie up in comparative safety. Heavy though these moorings were, it is recorded that one was dragged halfway up the coast to Kaiapoi during a severe storm.[33] Turner's duty as pilot ended in 1866 when he was succeeded by Alexander Reid, who was to hold the post for only one year.

George Day's son, Joseph, was appointed signalman in 1867 and later pilot. He was to serve Sumner in this capacity for 45 years. During this time he was never far from the waterfront. In 1892 a suggestion was made to erect a look-out on the top of Cave Rock as a shelter for the pilot. There was much criticism of the desecration of the rock by such a structure and it was 1898 before the stone look-out, which survives to the present day, was erected.



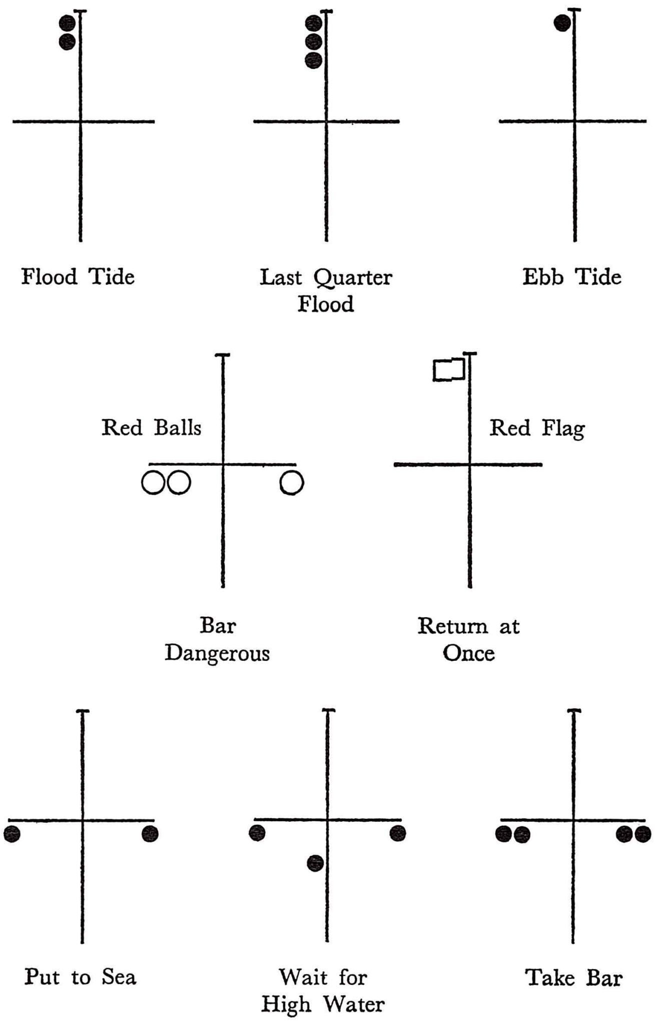
The Cave Rock signal mast, erected in 1893. The signals show that the tide is ebbing and that the Bar is dangerous.
Photograph: Kinsey Collection, Canterbury Museum.

From this look-out, Day kept a close watch on coastal shipping. His day often started at 3 or 4 am and he would remain on duty till about 8 pm, seven days a week. At the top of the tide he would be kept busy as several small coastal vessels entered or left the Estuary. In between tides life was more relaxed. He must have been a man of exceptional strength. Rowing his own dinghy, he was known to have towed a fully laden ketch or schooner over the Bar on the incoming tide when those vessels had been becalmed.



Joseph Day *Courtesy W. de Thier*

SIGNALS USED AT CAVE ROCK



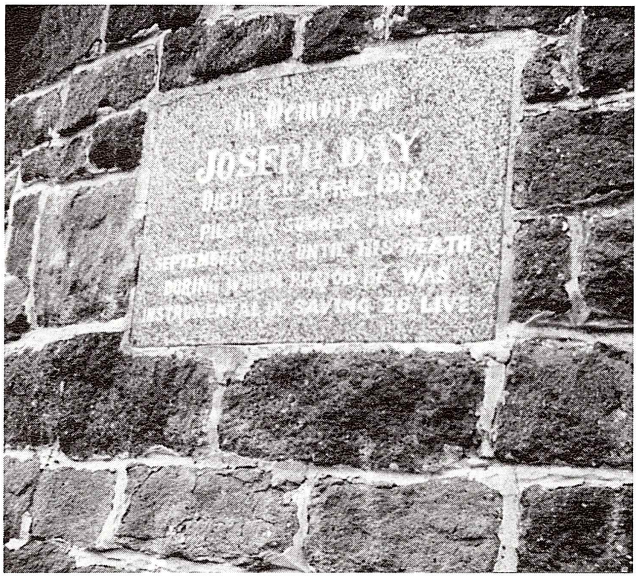
Courtesy W. de Thier

He was also an excellent life-saver and was awarded the Royal Humane Societies' Award of Merit for saving an estimated 26 lives on the Sumner Bar.

Even after the shipping trade in the Estuary had ceased, Day was kept busy signalling fishing boats working outside the Bar. The venturesome owners of motor boats who did not appreciate the dangers of crossing the Bar increased his responsibilities in his later years as a pilot.

Even on a calm day the Bar and the entrance to the Estuary can be rough. A view from the lookout on the top of Cave Rock, 1990. Photograph: Les Dew

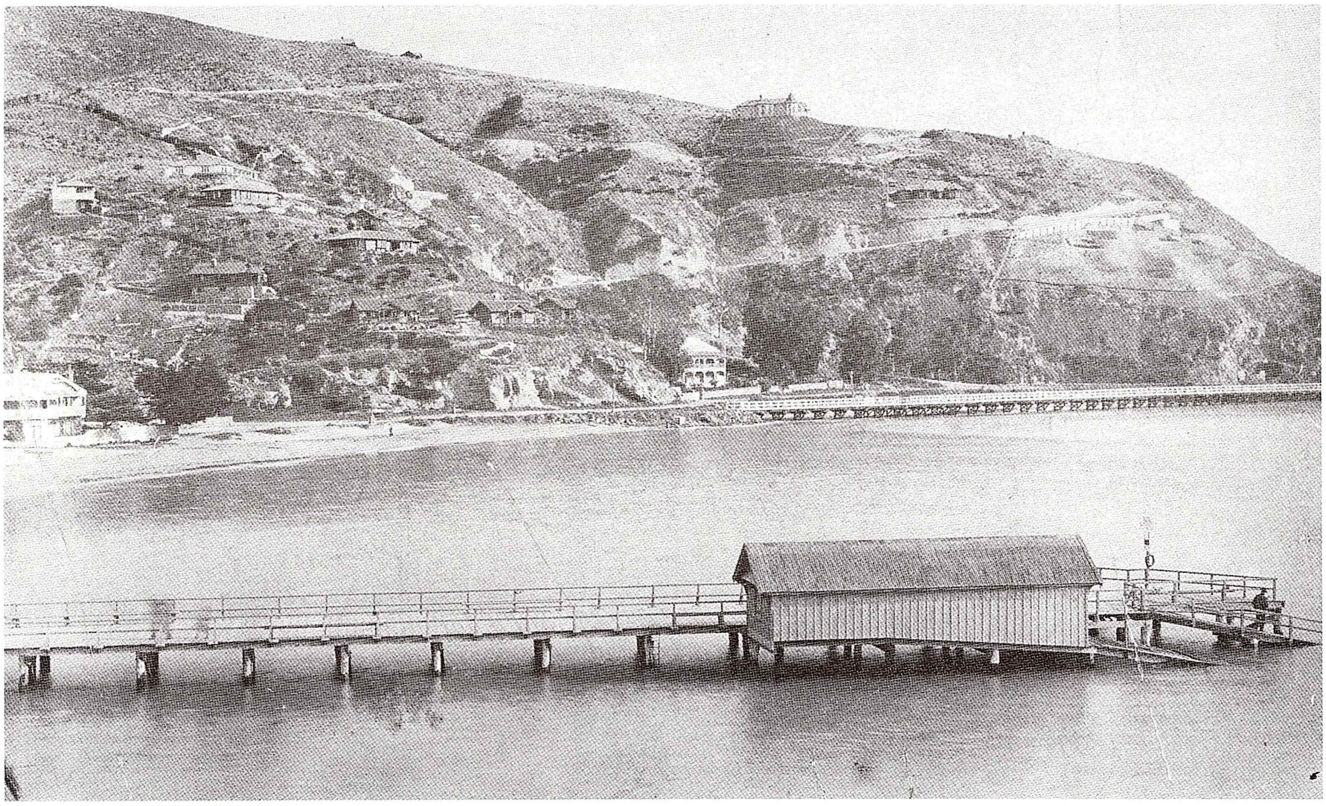
Failing health in 1912 caused his retirement. His duties were taken over by Joe Hines, who became pilot and lifeboat skipper. Following Day's death in 1914, the grateful citizens of Sumner erected a tablet on the wall of the Cave Rock look-out to commemorate his exploits. [34]



The plaque on Cave Rock which commemorates Joseph Day's service to the people of Sumner.
Photograph: Les Dew (1989).

the Sumner lifeboat

Considering the difficulties associated with the transport of goods by sea from Lyttelton to Christchurch and the dangers of crossing the Sumner Bar, it is no wonder that the Harbour Board established a lifeboat service in the early 1890s. Joseph Day was captain of the lifeboat. He could call on a volunteer crew of four to man a whaleboat when a vessel was in trouble on the Bar. In 1893 the flagstaff on Cave Rock was replaced with a set of signals to show the state of the Bar. A specially



Sumner Pier and lifeboat shed, with Clifton beyond, 1908. *Courtesy W. de Thier.*

designed lifeboat was ordered from an Auckland builder in 1894. She was found to be unsuitable because she would not right herself after capsizing. After trials the Lyttelton Harbour Board refused to take her and loaned the people of Sumner a lifeboat until a proper vessel could be obtained.

Sumner's first lifeboat, *Rescue*, was launched on August 25, 1898. She was built by White of Cowes on the Isle of Wight. Four rowers propelled this 20 foot craft which was fitted with buoyancy tanks. In its 32 years of service it was credited with saving about four hundred people.

Rescue was first stationed in a galvanised iron shed at the side of Cave Rock. When the Lyttelton Harbour Board's jetty at Sumner was extended in 1903 a shed was provided for the lifeboat. This position was more convenient to reach, in all states of the tide.

Although the lifeboat was used extensively there were times when it was difficult to obtain volunteer crews. As a consequence, the Sumner Lifeboat Brigade was formed and crews carried out regular training. This later became known as the Sumner Lifeboat Institution.

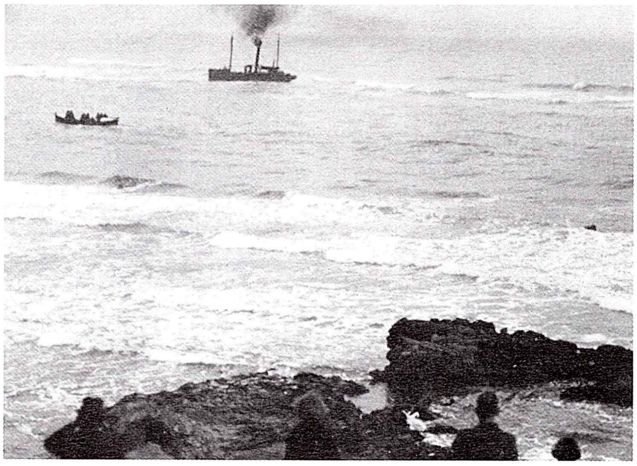
Another craft, the four-oared vessel *The Aid* was launched in February 1909 and stationed at Bells Harbour, Scarborough.

A legal opinion, obtained in 1912, advised the Lifeboat Institution that it was entitled to claim salvage on any vessels it assisted or saved.

The lifeboat service was suspended during the First World War.

A public appeal in 1929 enabled the Institution to purchase the *Rescue II*. She was built on the Isle of Wight in February 1930. With a length of 30 feet, a beam of seven feet three inches and a draught of three feet, she was powered by a 25 horsepower petrol engine, and had a service speed of nine and a half knots. She was self-righting and self-bailing and carried out many rescues while stationed at Sumner. One of its typical rescues involved two days spent off the Motunau coast, in 1942, assisting the crew of the collier *Kaiwarra* which had run aground. The crew of 35 were safely taken off the stricken ship. In another rescue in October 1937 the crew of the trawler *Muriel* was saved after that vessel had run aground on the Bar.

The lifeboat shed at Bells Harbour had to be extended to take *Rescue II*. Because of the shifting nature of the sand at Sumner, *Rescue II* was to be re-located on several occasions.



The Muriel *aground on Sumner Bar 1937. She is attended by the Sumner lifeboat.* *Courtesy W. de Thier.*

The Sumner Lifeboat Rescue *in action at Cave Rock.*

Rescues on the Bar could be treacherous. When struck by a freak wave, an inexperienced man on the steering oar could find himself suspended in mid air above the waves, or even thrown overboard. In one tragic incident, during Joseph Day's term as captain, the lifeboat was capsized on the Bar without warning and four of the five man crew were drowned.

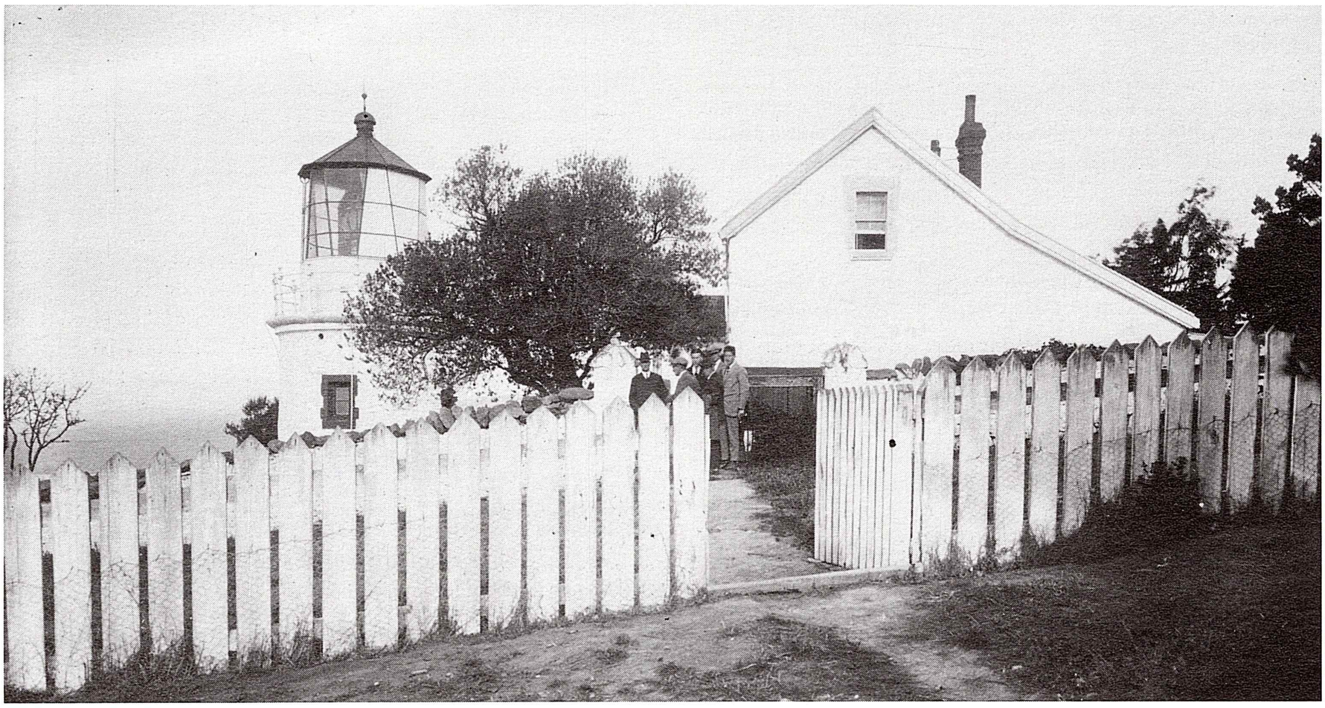
Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

In 1932 she was stationed at Shag Rock, and later shifted back to Scarborough in 1962.

A radio-telephone base was established in the old signal station on the top of Cave Rock in 1958. From this vantage point a great sweep of Sumner Bay, Pegasus Bay and the mouth of the Estuary could be obtained. The volunteeer crew were, and continue to be, proud of their fast turn out. Within four minutes of the alarm sounding, the crew is ready to go to sea.

Rescue II was fitted with a diesel engine in 1964. When the Lifeboat Institution acquired *Rescue III* in 1970, *Rescue II* was transferred to Kaikoura and stationed at South Bay. Both *Rescue I* and *Rescue II* now live in retirement, on show at Ferrymead Historic Park. *Rescue III* has a speed of eight to nine knots and a range of 550 miles. She is equipped with radio and radar. In recent years, the lifeboat service has been augmented by smaller jet rescue craft.[35]

the Godley Head lighthouse

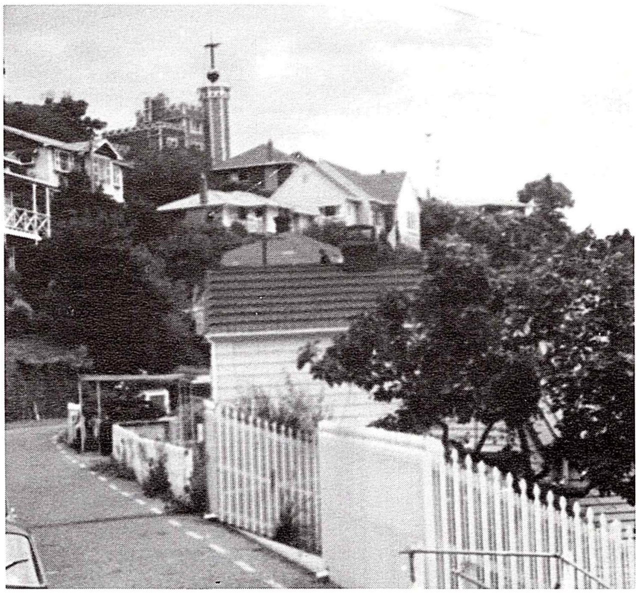


The lighthouse and keeper's cottage on Godley Head. In November 1859 the Provincial Government voted £200 for its construction. By December that year the amount had been reduced to £100 which may explain why it was not built for another six years. In clear weather the light is visible for 29 nautical miles. The lighthouse was converted to automatic working in 1976.
Photograph: W. A. Taylor Collection, Canterbury Museum

the Lyttelton timeball station

Safety at sea depended on accurate navigation which, in turn, depended on precise timekeeping. One of the last buildings ordered by the Provincial Government was the impressive timeball station, which still stands on the hill above the Sumner Road. Built by prison labour from locally quarried stone, the building houses the timeball clock and apparatus. Operations began on December 23, 1876. From that date the ball was hoisted to the top of the mast each day at 12.55pm. At precisely 1.00 pm the ball dropped to give the standard time so that ships' captains could rate their chronometers in terms of Greenwich Mean Time. The timeball ceased operating in 1935 when frequent and reliable radio time signals made this old system redundant. Navigation has recently been revolutionised by the use of satellites to obtain a ship's position with remarkable accuracy.

Recently restored by the Historic Places Trust, the timeball station is the only working example of its kind in the southern hemisphere.



The timeball station situated high above the harbour 1990.
Photograph: Les Dew

planning for port improvements

It was not long before the early settlers became irritated by the cost, the delays and the losses associated with transporting their possessions over the Bar. The Land Purchasers' Society was the first organisation set up to look after the interests of the people of the new colony. In 1851 it studied the vexed question of transport between Lyttelton and Christchurch.

Engineers engaged by the Society could see no way to significantly improve water transport so, in 1852 a decision was made to complete the Sumner Road. Because there was only £5,000 available for the project, and that sum would only extend the road by a short distance, the Society was obliged to seek other solutions. Work on the Sumner Road did proceed slowly while arguments continued over the best alignment, but it was 1857 before the road was completed. Even then it had a difficult zig-zag section at the top of Evans Pass. Several proposals were considered for eliminating the zig-zag, including a tunnel at the top of the pass. It was not until 1920 that re-alignment of the road led to the eventual elimination of the zig-zag. In the meantime hundreds of tons of goods were transported by sea and landed at Sumner or up the rivers.

At the same time an unnamed engineer told the Society that the Bar could be improved and made safe for vessels of up to 200 tons, for a cost of about £4,000. It was considered that this would be sufficient until it was possible to construct a railway to Lyttelton.

The people of Lyttelton took fright at this proposal. If ships of 200 tons could safely enter the Estuary, they reasoned, overseas ships would not come beyond Wellington. There the cargo could be trans-shipped and carried direct to Christchurch, thereby depriving Lyttelton of the bulk of its trade. The townsfolk, merchants and shippers of Lyttelton banded together to strenuously oppose this proposal.[36]

One proposal to improve the mouth of the Estuary was to blast away the rocks which restricted the entrance near Cave Rock. Sea walls were to be built to restrict the river flow in the hope that this would scour out and deepen the channel. The land behind the sea walls was to be reclaimed.

Captain Drury of the survey ship *Pandora* was opposed to this proposal. In a report in December 1854, he gave his opinion that the mouth of the Estuary should not be interfered with in any way. Even with sluggish rivers such as the Avon and Heathcote, any alterations could be a "ticklish business" and he considered that it was not possible to predict what the rivers would do. He favoured a jetty at Sumner where large ships could lay off and their goods be ferried by punts or longboats.

A second proposal was for a harbour at Sumner, where large ships could unload at jetties to be built in Sumner Bay and the goods trans-shipped to smaller vessels for delivery to the wharves up the Heathcote River.

A third proposal was to build a railway from Christchurch to Sumner. In 1856 the Christchurch and Sumner Railway and Navigation Company issued a prospectus outlining their proposals for such a venture at a cost of £50,000. This consisted of a single line railway of nine miles, a stone jetty, two steam lighters and moorings. The stone to build these works was to come from the Morten Estate on Mount Pleasant.[37] Nothing came of this proposal, but it is interesting to note that one of the proposed Lyttelton – Christchurch railway lines investigated by George Robert Stephenson in 1859 ran through Sumner.[38]

Objectors to these proposals pointed out that they all required a large proportion of the Sumner Road to be built, so it made sense to concentrate on completing the road rather than building an expensive port at Sumner. By 1855 it was generally agreed that the chief port of the province must remain at Lyttelton and that any other port was only a temporary expedient. The planning then turned to a railway to link the port and the town.[39]

a port for Sumner

Sumner was planned as one of the principal towns of the Canterbury settlement. Because of its sheltered location and good climate and its well drained soils it was thought that it would attract many of the early settlers. Lack of suitable transport into the area meant that this plan did not proceed and, as a consequence, Sumner developed as a rural farming community.

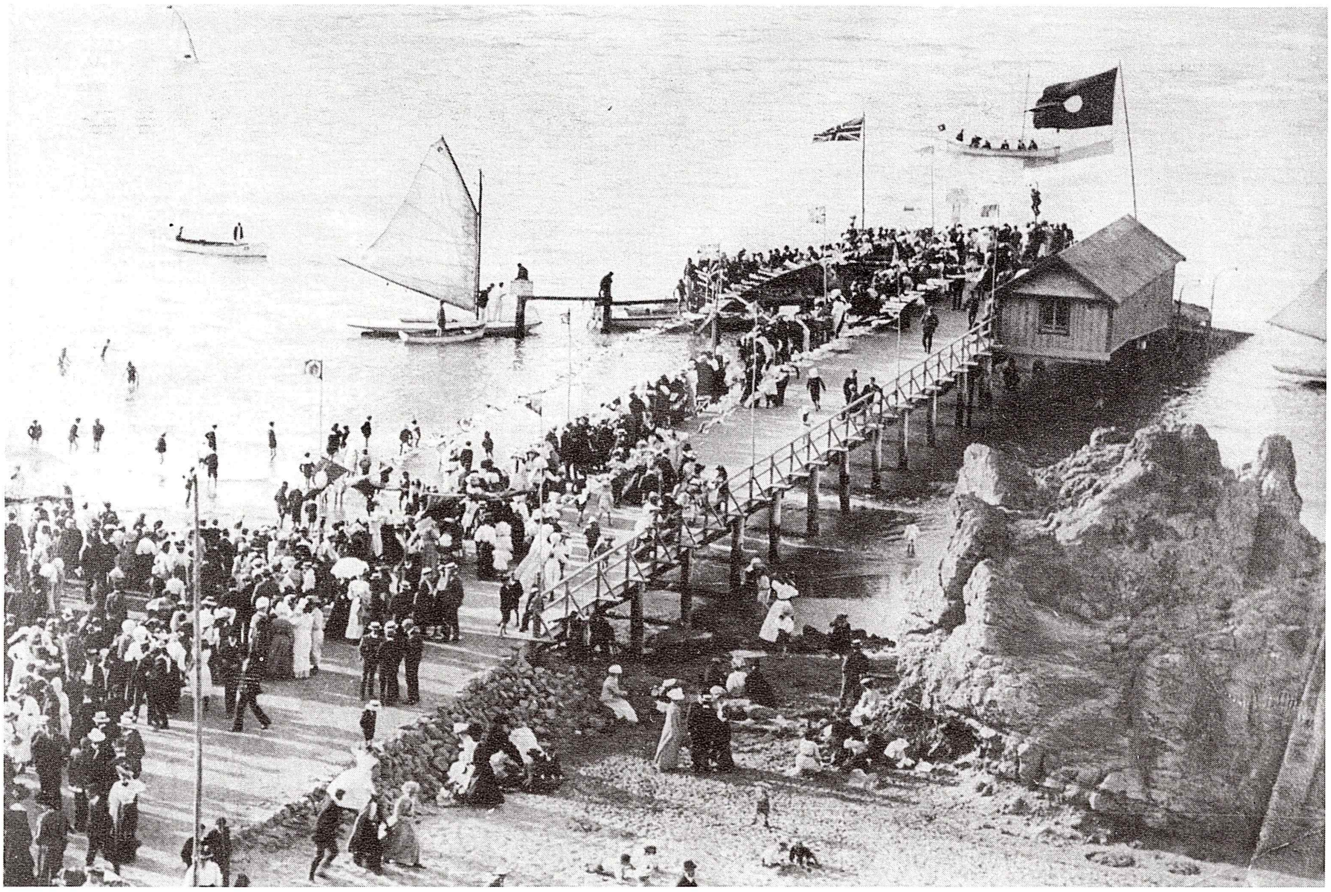
Although plans to build a port at Sumner did not eventuate and the town was bypassed when the Lyttelton – Christchurch Railway was opened, Sumner did have a shipping service for a time. A pier and landing stage were built near Cave Rock in 1883 by S W Williams at a cost of £405. The pier was rebuilt twenty years later with wider decking.[40]

Ships on the regular run between Lyttelton and Wellington crossed the Bar and tied up at the Sumner Pier to take on cargo and passengers on their northern voyage. One such visitor was the *Wakatu*, which called at intervals of three to seven days between 1883 and 1920, before proceeding to Port Robinson in Gore Bay to load produce from the Cheviot Hills Estate.

Another regular caller was the 124 ton steamer *Cygnet*. Before the First World War she had a regular run from Lyttelton to the Peninsula bays. On her northern runs she made regular calls at Sumner and Kaikoura.

As well as regular passenger sailings to Kaikoura, several excursions were made to this, then remote, part of the country. For example, the "Lyttelton Times" of December 20, 1877 advertised that the steamer *Tui* would depart the following Saturday for an excursion to Kaikoura, returning on the Tuesday morning.

If the idea of travelling by ship from Sumner to Kaikoura seems strange, a glance at the photographs in Volume 5 of this series (pages 4 and 51) will show why the sea journey was



The Sumner Pier during a local Gala Day, January 1908. *Photograph: Canterbury Museum.*

preferable to the rough roads of the time.

Due to the ever-changing channels of the rivers running through the Estuary, sand deposits built up in Clifton Bay and eventually the Sumner Pier was left high and dry.

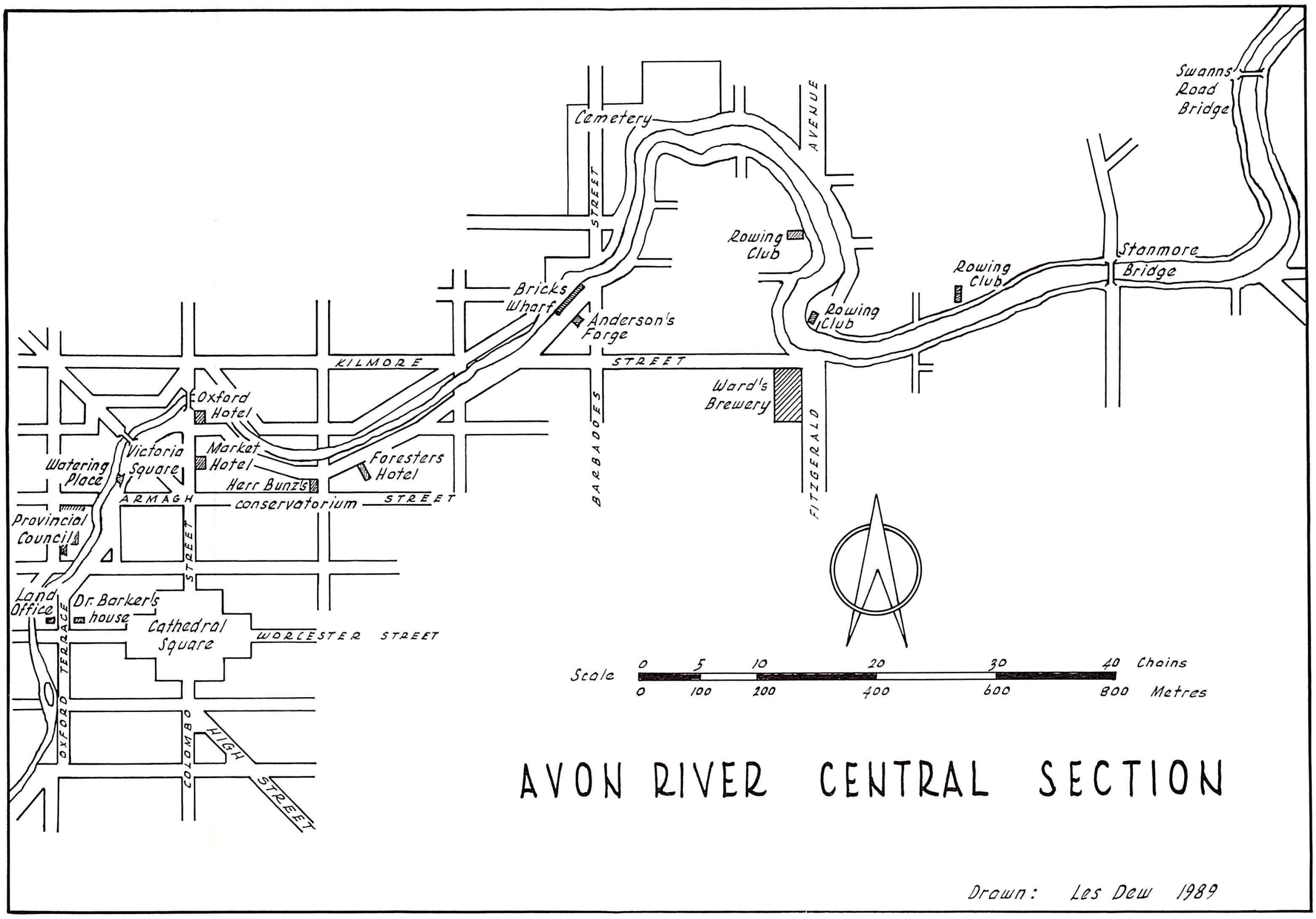
Over the years several proposals were put forward to re-open a port at Sumner. In 1910, for example, a harbour at Scarborough was considered so that coal, timber and general supplies could be landed. These proposals have failed because the potential revenue from such schemes would be insufficient to justify the initial capital cost of building the port.

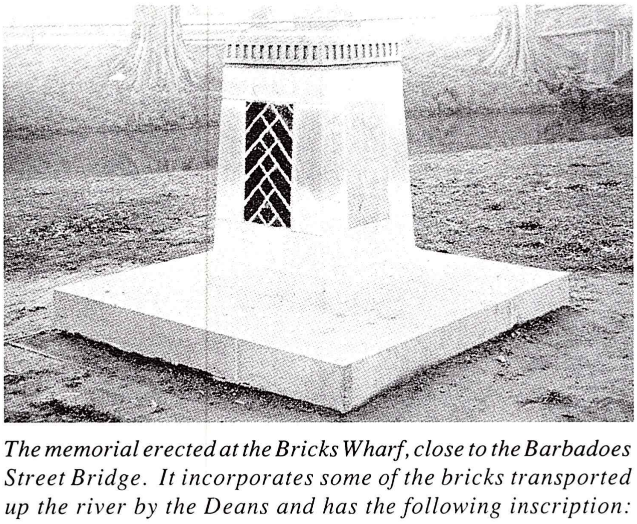
Although very close to Sumner, the small settlements at Taylors Mistake and Boulder Bay were completely isolated for many years. Before the formation of the road across the headland, the only access to these settlements was by sea. Unique to Taylors Mistake were the cave dwellers who lived on the cliffs above the waves. All their possessions and supplies had to be carried around by boat from Sumner. Jesse Worgan, a dental surgeon of Christchurch, became a cave dweller at Taylors Mistake. He was a keen musician and had his piano shipped around to his new abode in a 15 foot, flat-bottomed rowing boat. Worgan lived until 1926.

Crossing the Bar was always a risky business. From the first wreck in 1845, when the Deans' whaleboat was swamped on the Bar, it was estimated that some 30 to 40 vessels were lost in this locality.

Photograph: Canterbury Museum

transport on the Avon





The memorial erected at the Bricks Wharf, close to the Barbadoes Street Bridge. It incorporates some of the bricks transported up the river by the Deans and has the following inscription: "This cairn marks the site of the Bricks Wharf where the early settlers landed in 1843". It was unveiled on Anniversary Day, December 16, 1926, attended by descendants of the Deans family.

The early success in transporting goods up the Avon to the Bricks soon led to the extensive use of the river for navigation. Tow paths 25 feet wide were reserved on both banks from the Estuary to the Fendalton Bridge. The area close to the Bricks became the hub of the new town, with the people who worked on the wharf, or who ran the boats living in the nearby suburbs of Richmond and St. Albans.

In 1851 the Bricks site was leased to John Thacker, who owned a large sawmill in Okains Bay on Banks Peninsula, at a cost of 50/– per year. Thacker built a breastwork 200 feet in length along the river bank and fenced off a secure wharf area to enable vessels of up to 15 tons to unload their cargoes at all seasons.[41] He established a timber yard supplying the needs of the early settlers who were anxious to begin building their homes in the new town. A comfortable four-roomed house was erected at the wharf to complete this small but busy port.

After the early settlers had landed their possessions at the Bricks, the main cargoes were building materials: timber, bricks and cockleshells for making lime. The busy river traffic encouraged many settlers to establish farms along the banks of the Avon because of the availability of transport to take their produce up to the town.

Although the Provincial Government took no part in the river transport, it did pay a sum of £500 to J S Browning in 1857 to prepare a chart of the river from the Estuary to the site of the future New Brighton Tramway Bridge. During the next few years various stretches of the lower river were straightened.

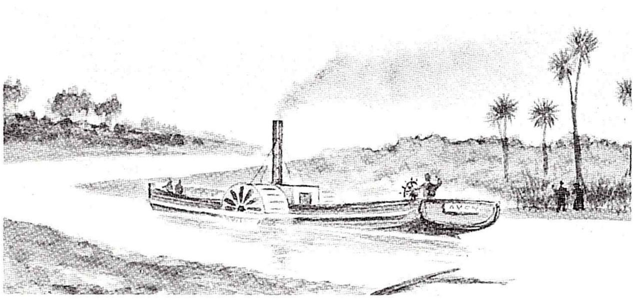
Some people chose sections upstream from the Bricks in anticipation of the river being improved for shipping. Some small vessels with light cargoes did go higher up the river. For example, a plasterer, Mr Worth, received regular shipments of cockleshells for lime making, at his establishment near Colombo Street. However, the Bricks was to remain the principal landing place.

Regular traders up the Avon were the 15 ton cutter *Julia* which was specially constructed in 1856 for the trade between Sumner and the Bricks. Another was the nine ton ketch *Fanny* which was built in 1851. Under the command of Captain Smith she made many trips up the Avon. While working for the Christchurch Conveyance Company in 1852 she went aground on the Sumner Bar twice. Fortunately she was floated off without sustaining any appreciable damage and continued in service until 1857.[42]

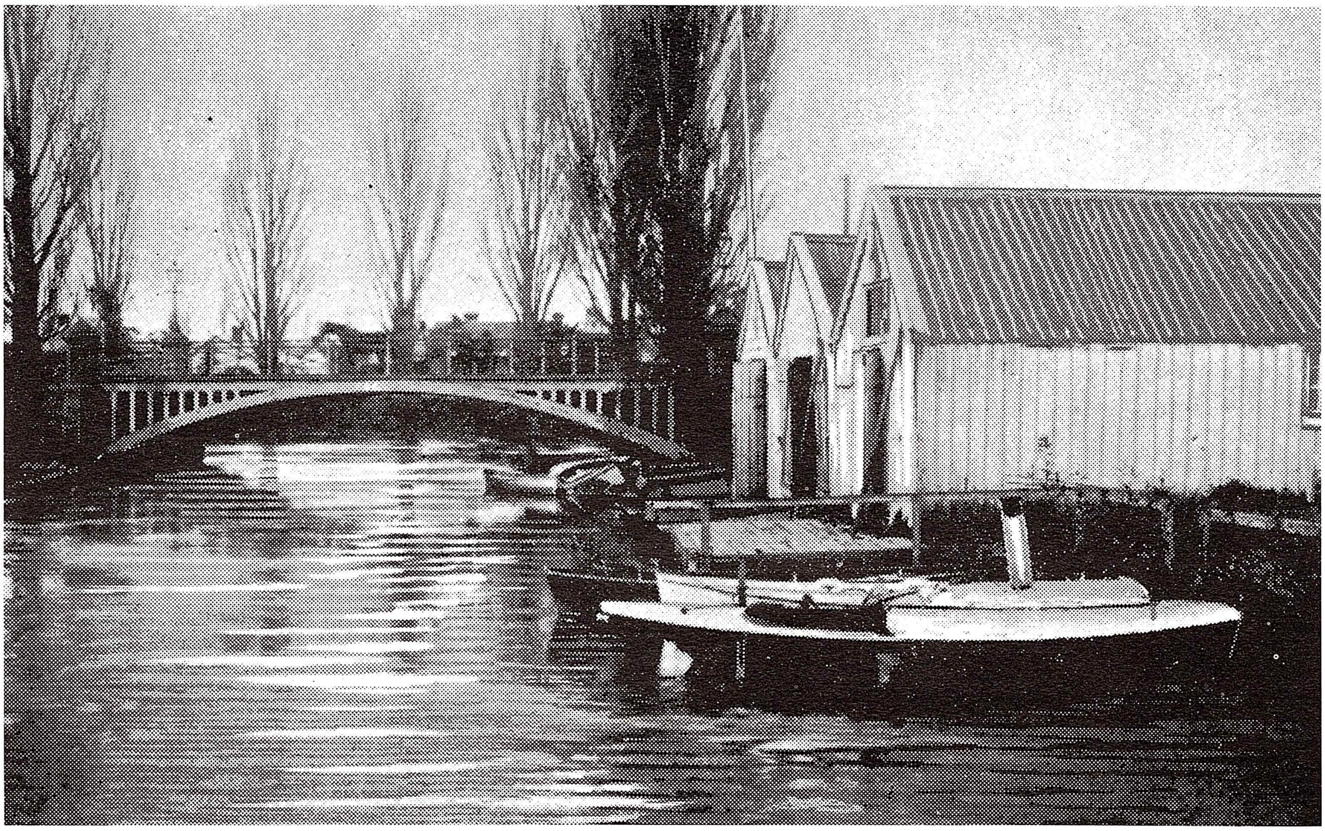
Despite the prediction that the opening of the Lyttelton to Sumner Road would sound the death knell of the river trade, this was not to be the case. Opened on August 24, 1857, the road was steep and tortuous, and had the previously mentioned zig-zag approach to Evans Pass. Experiments were carried out on the Bridle Path, including one where six bullocks hauled 17 hundredweight of goods on a dray. Finding that the hill roads were far from suitable for the transport of heavy goods, local merchants continued to transport their goods by river.

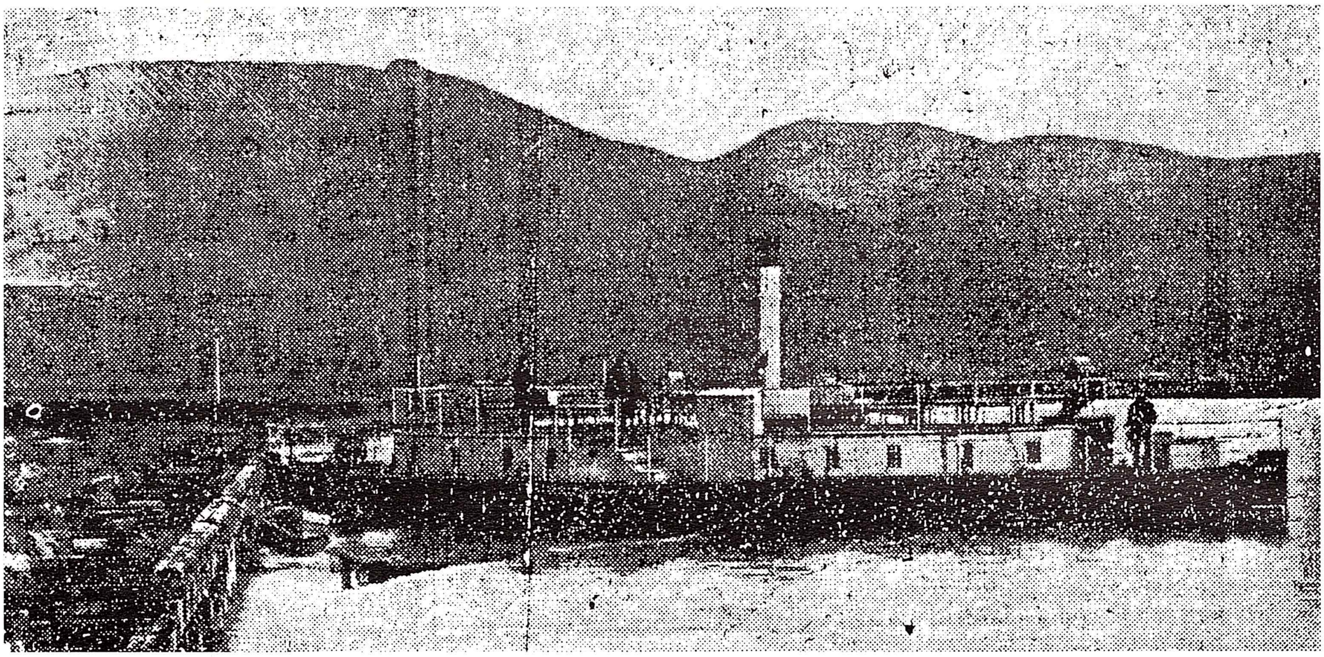
In August 1858 a group of merchants formed the Avon Steam Navigation Company. Their vessel, the paddle- steamer *Avon* was built in Scotland, shipped out in parts, assembled in eight weeks and launched in Lyttelton Harbour. Powered by two 16 horsepower engines, this 35 ton vessel was 62 feet long and had a total beam, including the paddle boxes, of 15 feet. She had a draught of 30 inches and a depth of six feet six inches in her hold.[43] For providing this service, the company received a subsidy of £300 from the Provincial Government.

After assembly she made two successful trial runs to Sumner by February 25, 1860. Entering service, she made her maiden voyage to the Avon River on February 29, 1860. Leaving Lyttelton at 8.00am she reached Sumner in an hour and a half. Some of the Company's shareholders decided to join the vessel at Sumner but, if they were expecting a triumphal voyage up to the town, they were to be disappointed. By 10.00 am she had steamed across the Estuary and entered the Avon River. Although the charts of the day showed the Avon to be a winding river there were no markers in the river to mark the channel. It was not long before the *Avon* had run aground and, as the next high tide was at night, further progress was not possible that day. After floating off the sandbank, it took a further four hours to reach the Bricks during which time the vessel bumped and scraped across many unseen obstacles. When carrying cargo in service it was necessary to lighten the


The paddle-steamer Avon *which commenced trading on the Avon River in 1860. She was not successful on the river and was soon transferred to the Saltwater Creek run.*

H C Berry, courtesy J D Wilkinson


The Barbadoes Street bridge and boat sheds about the turn of the century. In the foreground are some of the little steamers and paddle-wheelers which plied for pleasure on the river.



An early photograph of the Maid of the Avon *at the Railway Wharf in the Heathcote River.*
Photograph: Canterbury Public Library.

vessel to enable it to sail across the many obstacles in the river. This was achieved by emptying some of the water in the boiler. Not only did this risk the possibility of an explosion, it also led to sand and mud being sucked in when the boiler was replenished with river water, to the detriment of her boilers and engines. In some cases this was so serious that the vessel was disabled until repairs could be carried out.

Finding the *Avon* not as suitable on the river as expected, she was transferred to work the port at Saltwater Creek where she loaded bales of wool to be trans-shipped at Lyttelton en route to London. She also made some trips between Lyttelton, Heathcote and Kaiapoi. In 1862 she was purchased by the New Zealand Government and converted into a gunboat for use in the Land Wars on the Waikato River.[44]

Another person who tried to develop the river transport along the Avon was John Mills. In 1865 Mills purchased the Foresters Hotel, on the banks of the Avon, just above the Bricks Wharf. In the same year he ordered a shipwright, J Dixon, to construct a 12 ton paddle-steamer, with two passenger cabins, named *Maid of the Avon*.

Although her funnel was hinged, the vessel often had trouble passing under the Stanmore Road Bridge and sometimes the funnel had to be completely removed.

She had a trial run down the river on September 28, 1866. A few days later she was host to many of the important businessmen, City Councillors and members of the Provincial Government. Despite strong winds and adverse tides she handled well on a return trip to New Brighton and the distinguished passengers were most impressed with her performance.

Some days later the *Maid of the Avon* left the Bricks with a full load of passengers for an excursion to New Brighton. On this occasion the vessel could not pass under the Stanmore Road Bridge and the unfortunate passengers had to find their own way home. After waiting four days without success, Mills, convinced that there was no right to block the waterway, cut away the centre portion of the bridge to allow his vessel to pass. Subsequent investigations proved that he was within his rights to do so.[45]

The Avon was always intended for navigation. When the Provincial Government had built the bridge in 1862 at a cost of £400, they built it too low to comply with the River Act. Residents in the north-eastern suburbs found the bridge very convenient and were most upset by Mills' action. With the bridge unusable many children were prevented from attending the school at Avonside.

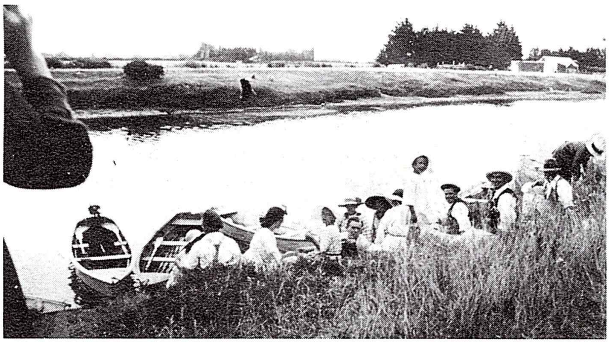
Bridges were somewhat of a luxury in the early days and the settlers did not want to lose the only bridge for miles around. To prevent a repetition of this trouble the "Stanmore Bridge Ordinance" was passed in January 1867. This enabled the bridge to be rebuilt and maintained, while protecting the right of navigation up the river.

John Anderson, foundryman and City Councillor, bought the *Maid of the Avon* in October 1867 and, after fitting new engines and boiler, used the vessel for pleasure trips to New Brighton. On one occasion, Anderson took his fellow councillors and their families for a day's picnic at the beach. Christchurch hotel-keepers chartered the vessel for picnic trips.

Anderson sold the vessel a year later. It continued to trade around Lyttelton Harbour for many years under the name of *Sensation*. She won the admiration of many people when she ran pleasure cruises around the many harbour bays, and out to the Heads.[46]

Before the coming of the tramways in 1880, it was quite common for picnic groups to use river transport for a day's outing. Typical of these trips was the picnic held by the choir members of St. Matthews Church, St. Albans, at the Burwood Tea Gardens. The journey between the Fitzgerald Avenue boatsheds and Burwood was made in a fleet of large family boats each seating 12 persons.[47]

While boat building became established around the Peninsula, Lyttelton Harbour and the Heathcote River, there is only one instance where boat building is recorded on the Avon. Thomas Merry farmed the land between Kerrs Road and Breezes Road and found overland transport for his produce almost impossible. In the mid-1850s he turned to boat building. Initially he was



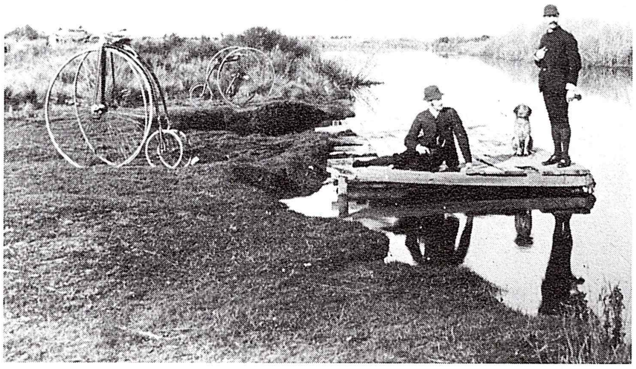
A picnic party on the Avon River.
Photograph: Mrs Mavis Smith.

not very successful and his first craft sank, its hull remaining visible in the swamp in Dallington for many years. His second vessel was more successful and was possibly the last pioneer craft built to carry firewood and stores up the river from the Estuary.[48]

Despite its sea frontage New Brighton was a late starter as far as settlement was concerned. By 1868, only 13 families had settled in the area and it was to be another four years before the seaside suburb began to develop. New Brighton had always been considered a potential port and one jetty was built on the north bank of the Avon just at the southern end of Racecouse Road (now Bower Avenue). This was a makeshift type of structure, which served the needs of the local people. Several small private jetties were also built in this stretch of the river. The main New Brighton jetty stretched along the eastern bank of the river from the tramway bridge to Beresford Street.

The road from Christchurch to New Brighton was little more than a track winding through the sandhills, suitable only for the occasional horseman. Bridges were a luxury and few were built. The people of Burwood were ferried across the river for many years at a point known as "The Punt". In those days there was much more water in the river and, until the advent of good roads, the river trade flourished although the bulk of the shipping used the easier navigable Heathcote.

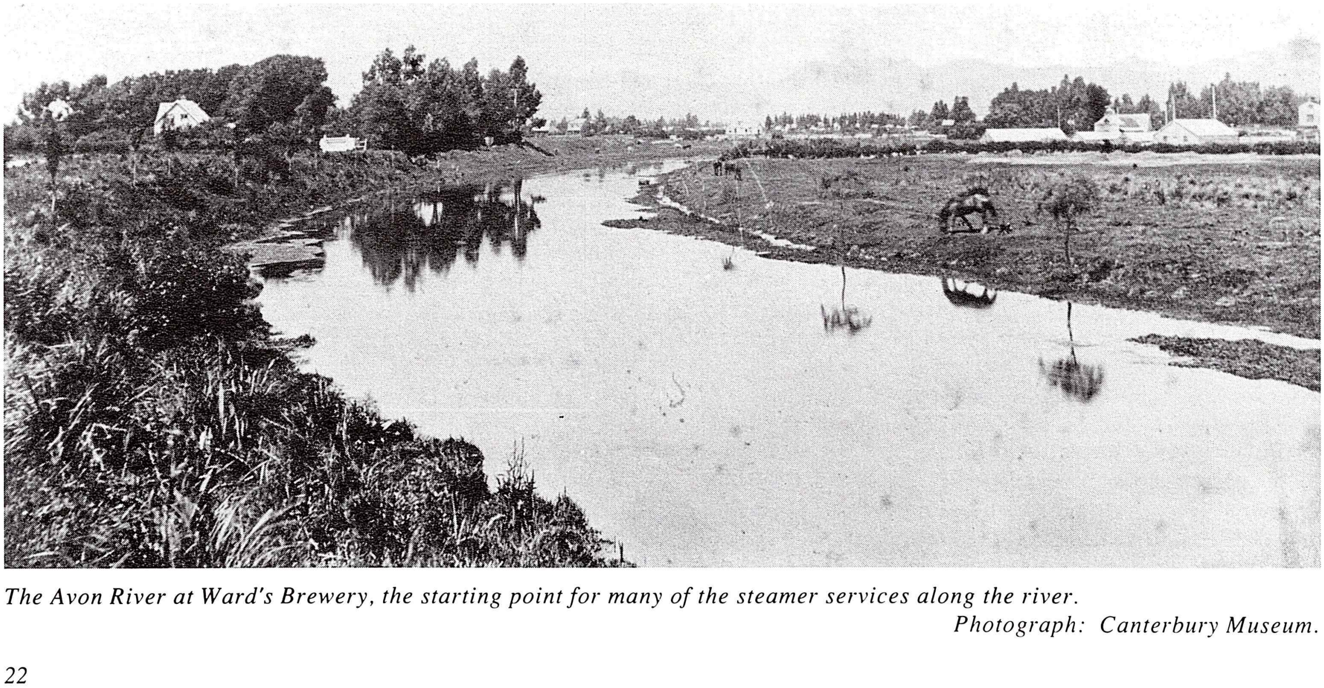
When J H Hopkins built an hotel at New Brighton Beach in 1872, he decided the best way to transport his patrons was by river. He immediately set about obtaining a steamer for the purpose. He chose a paddle-steamer with a draught of two feet, capable of carrying 170 passengers and completing the journey in two hours. He considered that a paddle-steamer would also be useful in keeping the river clear of weeds. The City Council gave Hopkins permission to build a landing stage outside Ward's Brewery, at the corner of Fitzgerald Avenue and Kilmore Street.



Transport in 1884. The craft in this photograph is believed to be the Burwood Punt, which served travellers in the district before bridges were built.
Photograph: Peter Dunbar.

Hopkins' steamer was named the *Brighton* by the Mayoress, Mrs Hart, at a ceremony on January 27, 1874, witnessed by hundreds of citizens assembled near the Stanmore Road Bridge. She immediately set off for New Brighton where her delighted passengers were given lunch at Hopkins' hotel, before returning to Christchurch. In the evening she sailed again, taking guests to a celebration ball at the hotel. During the summer months of early 1874 the *Brighton* made two return trips daily, leaving New Brighton at 8.30 am and 3.30 pm. Departures from Wards Brewery were at 11.00 am and 5.00 pm. The return fare was 2/6d.

In addition, the *Brighton* was in great demand for pleasure trips and picnics by many Christchurch groups. Churches, schools and business firms all made use of her services for picnics at the beach.



The Avon River at Ward's Brewery, the starting point for many of the steamer services along the river.
Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

About 80 members and friends of the Christchurch Volunteer Fire Brigade chartered the vessel for their annual picnic on April 3, 1874. Proceedings on board were enlivened by the presence of Herr Bunz's band. Did some of the more nervous passengers regard the playing of the popular tune "We won't be home till morning" as a prophecy?

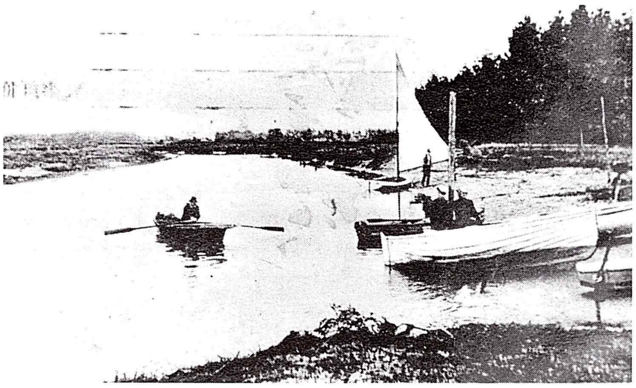
Three weeks later the children of St. Michael's Sunday School had a memorable trip to the beach on the *Brighton*. Races on the beach, lunch at the hotel and, on some occasions, a fireworks display in the evening made these picnics an unforgettable experience. Additional thrills were experienced depending on the tide, when the steamer went aground on the many sandbanks along the river.

It was a shame that such an enjoyable venture was not to last. Despite a suggestion in the "Lyttelton Times" that the people of Christchurch support the service, insufficient revenue was earned. By the start of the 1874-75 summer season, Hopkins had fallen on hard times financially and was forced to sell both his hotel and his steamer.[49]

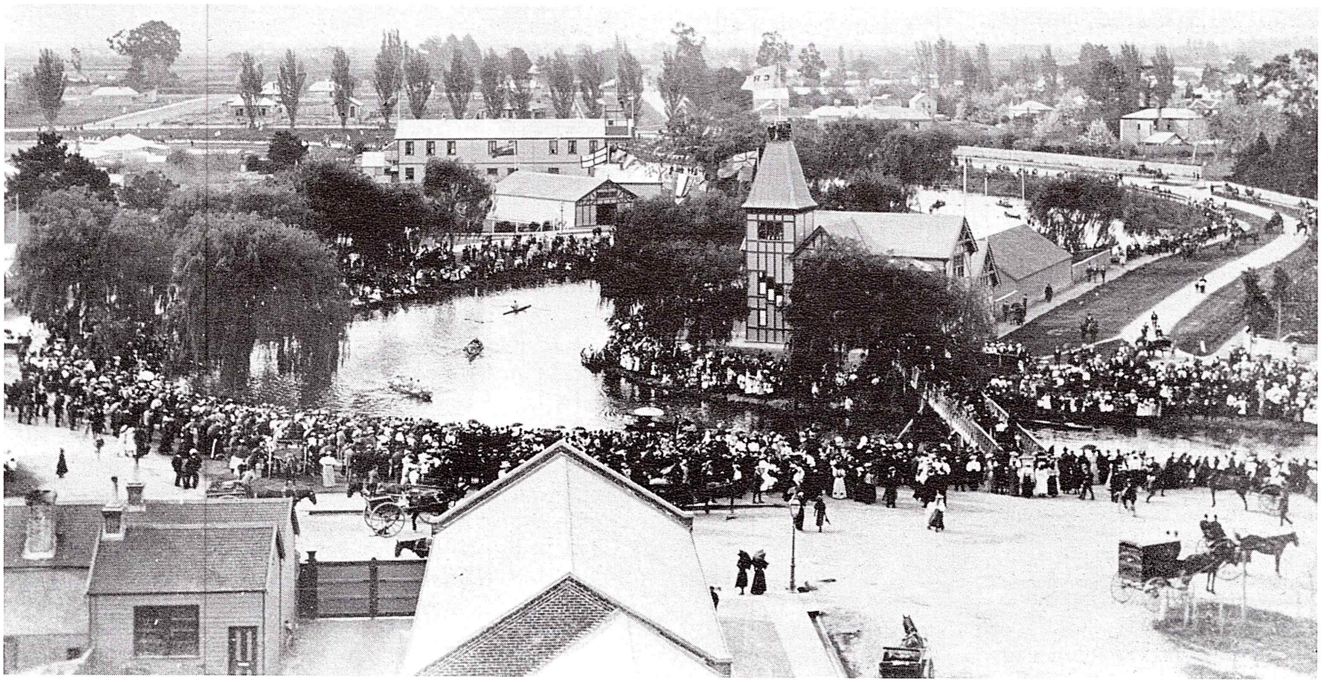
The next person to try his hand at the river trade was Janny King. Known as *The King,* his wooden steamer was 30 feet long, seven feet broad and powered by a 5 horsepower engine. King made several trips from the Colombo Street Bridge to both New Brighton and Sumner. His trim little craft was popular and, just when it looked as if the venture would succeed, the authorities condemned the vessel because it did not have a regulation boiler. Disheartened, King dismantled the vessel and sold the parts.[50]

Saturday December 8, 1883, saw the launching of yet another steamer for the New Brighton run. She was the *Diamond*, 40 feet long, 12 feet broad, steel hulled, flat- bottomed and capable of carrying 100 passengers. Owned by John Batley, the licensee of the Oxford Hotel in Colombo Street, she ran from a landing stage erected outside the hotel.

Built by McKay and Stevenson of Tuam Steet, the *Diamond* was carted by road to Victoria Square where she was launched in the cut away part of the river bank where horses were watered. The traditional bottle of champagne was broken over the bow. On her test run on January 8, 1884, ballasted with stone to test her ability to negotiate the shallows in the river, she gave a good account of herself. However, she was not to prove reliable in service. Her engines, built by W Lucas and Son in Kilmore Street, were designed to give her a speed of 10 knots. The vessel showed a certain reluctance when heading upstream and the trip from New Brighton took twice as long as expected.[51]



Herring Bay, on the Avon River, upstream from Bridge Street. Photograph: Pegasus Post.



Crowds gathered at the Canterbury Rowing Clubhouse at Fitzgerald Avenue, about the turn of the century. The two-storey building to the left is the Union Rowing Clubhouse.

Since 1861 the calm waters of the Avon have produced many of the country's best rowers. Originally four rowing clubs were grouped between the Stanmore Road Bridge and the Barbadoes Street Cemetery. After the completion of the river cut at Kerrs Reach in 1950, the clubs relocated on the new cut to take advantage of the wide, straight, deep stretch of the river.

Until 1950 the opening of the boating season was celebrated each spring with a long cavalcade of beautifully decorated boats. Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

After suffering damage to her paddles, as a result of frequent groundings on sand banks, she was withdrawn from service in March 1884. She spent some years plying the waters of the Estuary, providing a connecting service for the Sumner tramway, which was not completed until 1888.[52]

Navigation of the Avon was hampered by weed and silt. In 1857 the Provincial Government approved the expenditure of £1,500 to clear watercress from the Avon and Heathcote Rivers and in 1859 the Provincial Engineer, Edward Dobson, was instructed to clear the shoals in the lower reaches of the river. The City Council had earlier made an unsuccessful attempt at weed clearing, when in August 1864, it imported black swans to control the watercress. Once liberated, however,the swans immediately departed for distant lagoons.[53] In its early years, the Drainage Board was spending £400 per annum on weed cleaning but to no avail.

However, river traffic on the Avon was being severely eroded by other forms of transport. The opening of the railway to Ferrymead in 1863, and later to Lyttelton in 1867 meant that goods between the port and Christchurch bypassed the rivers. The Avon continued to be used for local traffic between Christchurch and New Brighton.

In 1887, the New Brighton Tramway was opened. People who had braved the river journey in all weathers were presented with a convenient, up-to-date method of transport which soon became popular. From that time interest in the river steamers declined, although some bulk goods such as coal, wood, flour and general stores continued to be carried along the river.[54]

There was one last attempt to establish a passenger service on the Avon, with the formation of the Avon Steam Packet and Dredging Company Limited in April 1890. Not only would their vessel transport passengers to New Brighton, it would also dredge the river and clear weeds. The public of Christchurch were invited to take shares in the company and members of the Canterbury Rowing Club were so impressed by the weed clearing claim that they also became shareholders.

Their vessel, the *Avonia*, built by Scott's Foundry in Manchester Street, was a flat-bottomed craft 50 feet in length with a beam of 12 feet. Fully loaded she had a draught of only nine inches. Propulsion was by means of a paddle-wheel mounted at the stern and her three rudders allowed her to be turned in her own length. A large awning was provided for the comfort of her 100 passengers. This could be raised as a shelter from the elements and, when lowered, it formed a comfortable cushion.

Her hinged funnel, designed to be raised or lowered, enabled her to pass comfortably under all the bridges on the river with the possible exception of the New Brighton Tramway Bridge. On February 19, 1890, her owners met representatives of the New Brighton Tramway Company, asking them to consider making alterations to the bridge. However, the Lyttelton Harbour Board considered that the steamer would be able to pass under the bridge safely except for a time near high water and no alterations were made to the bridge.

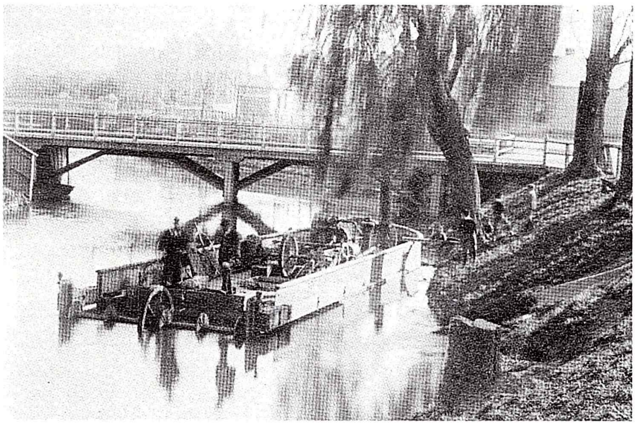
Ed Sefton, a New Brighton storekeeper, who brought cargoes of coal and wood up the river from Lyttelton, was also concerned about the height of the tramway bridge. He considered it to be an obstruction on a navigable waterway and on February 12, 1890, served notice on the New Brighton Tramway Company to have the bridge removed. This move was unsuccessful.

It took John Brightling's largest trolley, hauled by ten of his best horses, to transport the *Avonia* to the launching place near Ward's Brewery. She arrived safely, despite being stuck in a soft patch of the road opposite Cokers Hotel. Although there was no official ceremony, a large crowd assembled to see her launched on New Year's Eve.

During most of her days on the river, *Avonia* was under the command of Captain Alfred Owles, a well-known identity of early New Brighton. He was an accomplished seaman, having served as second mate on the 39 ton paddle- steamer *Lyttelton* on a delivery voyage from Liverpool via the Suez Canal.

On the river his brother, Ted, was engineer and the two brothers were later to secure dredging contracts from the Christchurch Drainage Board.

With a full load of passengers she left on her first run down the river on Saturday January 10, 1891. On the way down she rescued several yachts, which had been becalmed during a race, and towed them to safety.



The Avonia *at the turn of the century, in a less glamorous role. With knives fitted to the paddle blades she became the weed cutter on the Avon River.* *Courtesy W de Thier.*

The crew moored her safely at the New Brighton jetty for the night and were surprised next morning to find that she had sunk at her moorings overnight. It appears that someone had opened her seacocks during the night, allowing the vessel to fill with water. Although her owners advertised in the "Lyttelton Times" of January 21, 1891, offering a reward of £5 for information leading to the conviction of the offender, there is no record of that person being found.

The *Avonia* was raised within a week. At low tide she was jacked onto an even keel by the use of a set of sheer legs and water was pumped out, using the manual pumps of the Christchurch Volunteer Fire Brigade's engine. She floated safely on the next high tide. Fortunately she suffered no ill effects from the silt which was running in the river. After a general clean-up she was back in service and gave a good account of herself.

She was not used entirely on the Avon. On February 7, 1891, she made her first trip to Sumner. Although unfavourable tides made for a slow trip of about an hour, she was found to handle much better in the deeper waters of the Estuary than in the confined shallows of the Avon. Despite the assistance of her three rudders, her length made her difficult to manoeuvre and much time was lost sitting on sand banks in the river waiting for suitable tides to re-float the vessel. Some of these problems were overcome by raising her paddle-wheel six inches and transferring the rudders from the bow to the stern.

Avonia also sailed on the Heathcote, lifting cargo from the tanneries.

As well as the beach at New Brighton there were many popular picnic spots along the Avon which could be reached by steamer. There was the Burwood Tea Gardens, which people would row to for a Sunday picnic. Wainoni was another favourite spot to which the steamer delivered picnickers. This extensive garden with its artificial lake was developed by Professor Bickerton in the 1880s. It was also famous for the spectacular fireworks displays held there.

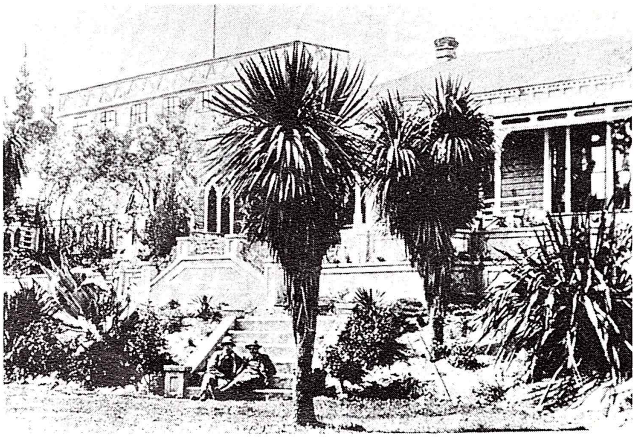
Perhaps the most favoured destination was Bligh's Gardens, situated on a bend in the river below the New Brighton Tramway Bridge, just south of present day Evans Avenue. It was described as an oasis in the desert, 38 acres of sandhills which had been transformed into one of the most popular picnic spots in Christchurch. A large lawn, shady tree-lined walks, colourful flower beds and an orchard with trees laden with all manner of fruit made up this idyllic setting. A large children's playground formed part of the park. The sportsman was also well catered for with archery, rifle shooting and punts for fishing.

By this time, the river was said to be more like a filthy ditch than a river and visitors were becoming less enthusiastic about taking trips along it. If the passenger trade was to be retained along the Avon, river improvements were essential.

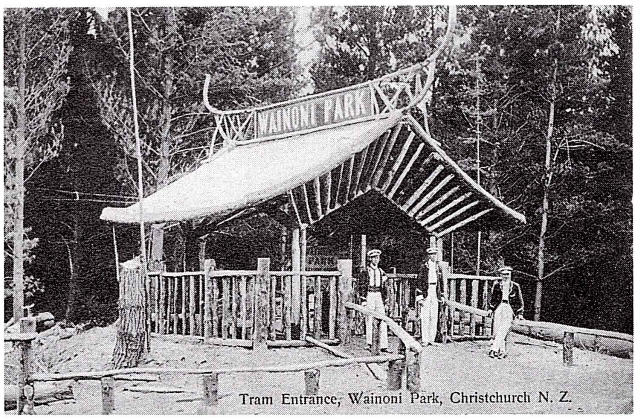
Captain Marquet, who lived in Woolston and had made many trips up the Heathcote, favoured dredging the Avon and using paddle-steamers to cut the weed.

Following the success of the passenger trips, the owners of the *Avonia* set about winning a contract for weed cutting and dredging, using the *Avonia* to tow a triangular shaped dredge with three scythe blades attached to each side. Members of the Drainage Board were taken for a trip on the *Avonia* in May 1891, so they could judge the capabilities of the vessel for themselves. As a result A W and O E Owles were awarded a contract to dredge the river and they hired the *Avonia* for this purpose.

On September 25, 1891 a further trip was made so that local body representatives could view progress on the contract. Despite being drenched by a sudden shower, they all agreed that the state of the river had been greatly improved. All this came to an abrupt halt on December 16, 1891, when the *Avonia* sank once more at her moorings at New Brighton. Disillusioned, the Owles brothers relinquished their contract with the Drainage Board. John Brightling, who built and operated many of the early tramlines around Christchurch, took up the contract and had the *Avonia* brought to the surface and repaired in January 1892.



Bickerton's Gardens at Wainoni, showing the house and the great hall. Photograph: Pegasus Post.



The Pages Road entrance to Bickerton's Gardens.

By April of that year she was able to resume her duties. In between dredging, she carried cargo to the *Alice Jane* which was moored at the New Brighton Wharf, and had just discharged a cargo of timber.

When the Avon Steam Packet and Dredging Company went into liquidation on July 31, 1894, they gave the *Avonia* to Brightling as they wanted to be rid of her. Brightling continued the dredging contracts, interspersed with some cargo handling on the river until 1899. After that the *Avonia* was left derelict opposite Reaby's farm at Burwood.[55]

Several attempts were made to establish passenger services between Sumner and New Brighton. The following advertisement appeared in the "Lyttelton Times" on November 18, 1882.

SHIPPING NOTICES

Sumner to New Brighton by water via the Estuary on and after November 7 (until further notice).

The new and powerful steam launch *Venture* will run pleasure trips to and from Sumner and the New Brighton Bridge (Paynton's) landing passengers at New Brighton Hotel Wharf daily.

From Sumner at 11.30 & 3.00 will meet Hamilton's coach to town.

From New Brighton at 1.00 & 4.30 arriving in time for Hayward's coach.

Fares: Single 1/–, Return 1/6d
Children under 12 half price.

Special arrangements for towing boating parties from Bridge to Sumner and back.
For particulars apply to J. Crawford, Sumner.

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[56]

An alternative way of transport from Christchurch to New Brighton was contained in the New Brighton Monthly Magazine, published by the local churches, in the August 1, 1907 issue.

It was reported that a deputation of five local ratepayers waited on the Christchurch Tramway Board with a proposal to build a tramline to the Dallington Bridge to link with a proposed motor launch service along the Avon to New Brighton.

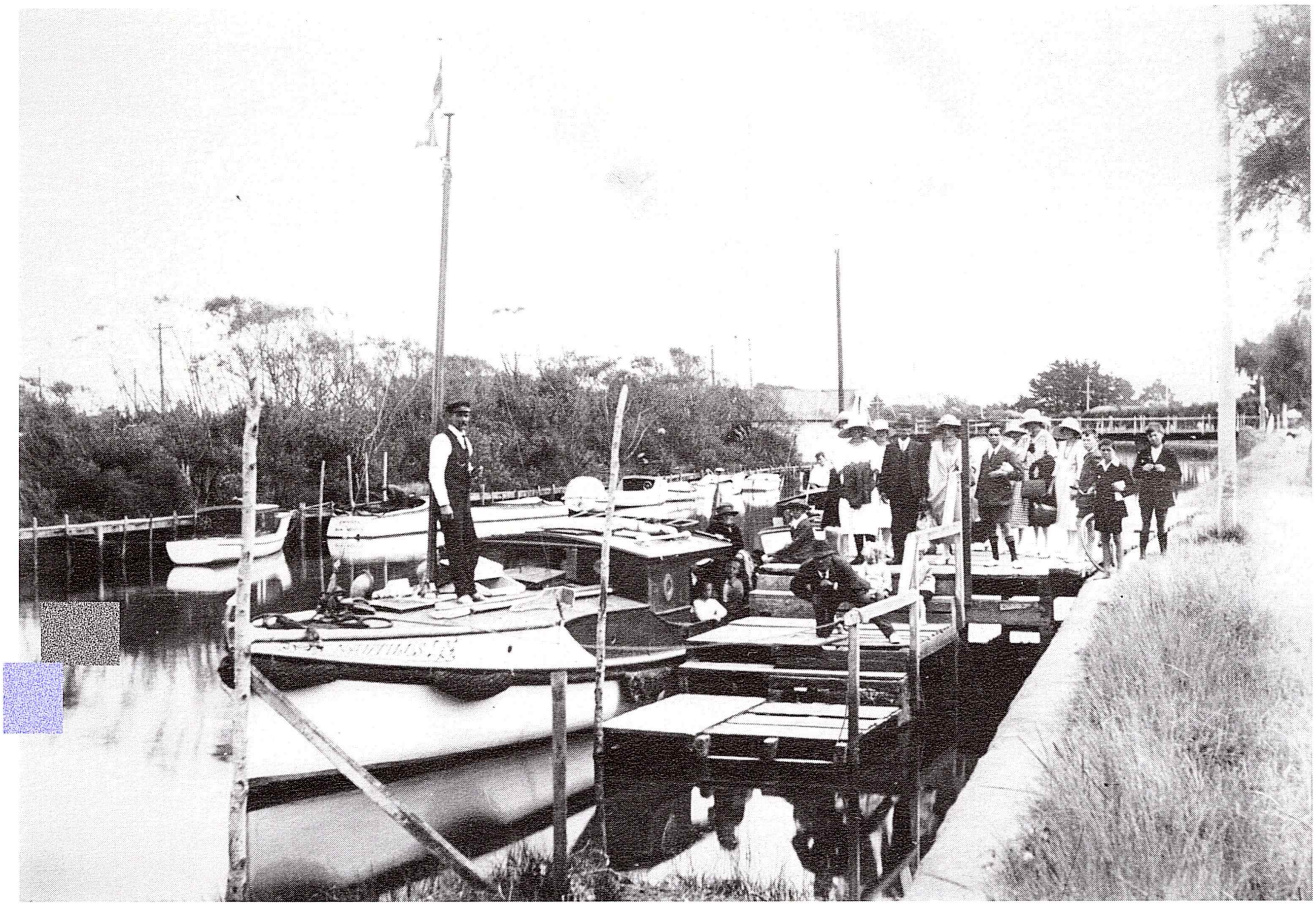
The tramline would leave the North Beach line in Stanmore Road and travel to the Dallington Bridge via Armagh Street, Brittan Street, Mile Road (Woodham Road) and Gloucester Street. It was estimated that the line, suitable for running steam trams, would cost £2,500 to construct. After due consideration, the Tramway Board declined the request.

A line was built to the Dallington Bridge in 1912. This ran via Worcester Street, Rochester Street and Gloucester Street. By the time the line was built all thought of a connecting launch service to New Brighton had been forgotten.

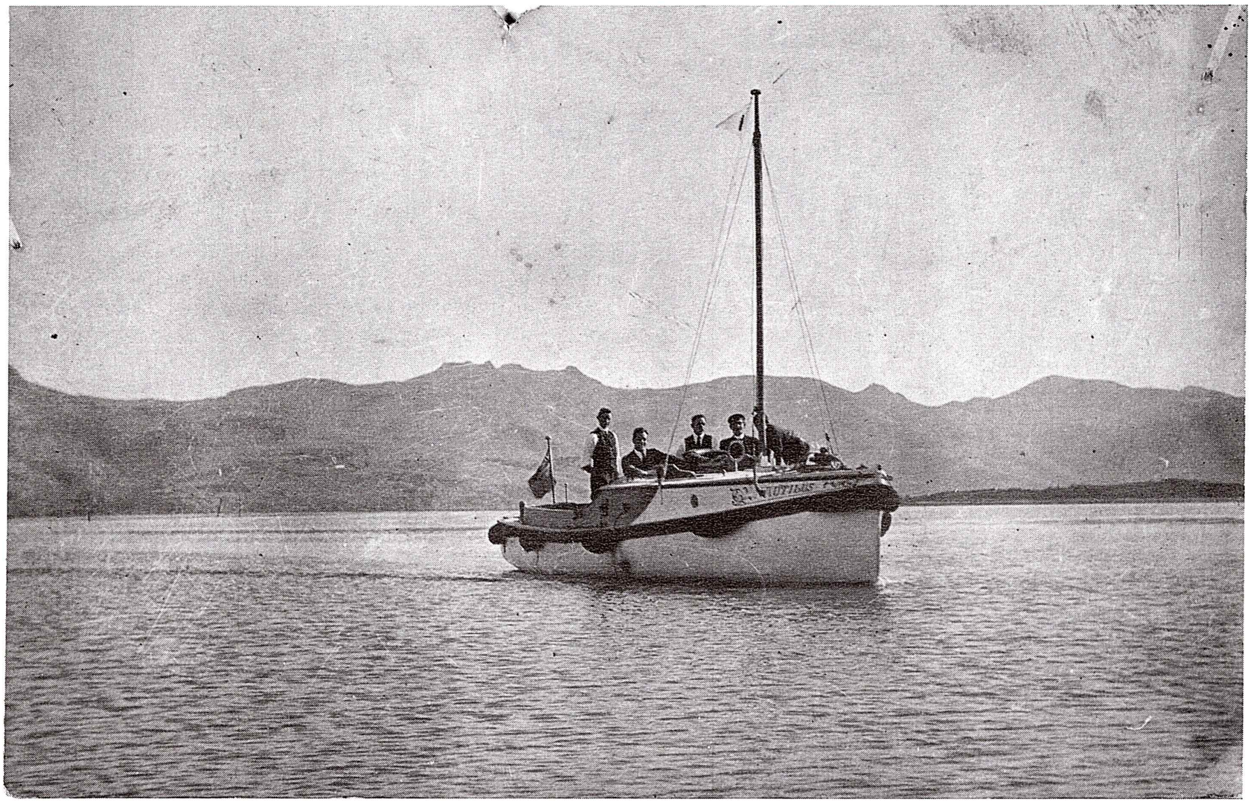
Harry Hawker, a local baker and active member in local affairs, owned a large launch *Nautilus*. He was a member of the New Brighton Power Boat Club and on Sundays and public holidays he could be found at the helm of the *Nautilus* taking parties of up to 20 passengers from the New Brighton bridge to Pleasant Point or sometimes upstream to Swanns Road.

A New Brighton Borough Councillor, Henry Walker, introduced a motor launch service between Sumner and New Brighton, with the twin-screw launch *Tauriki*. She was 40 feet long, 10 feet in the beam and was capable of carrying 60 passengers. The three quarters of an hour trip provided pleasant sailing and was well patronised.[57] The *Tauriki* also made occasional trips to Lyttelton.

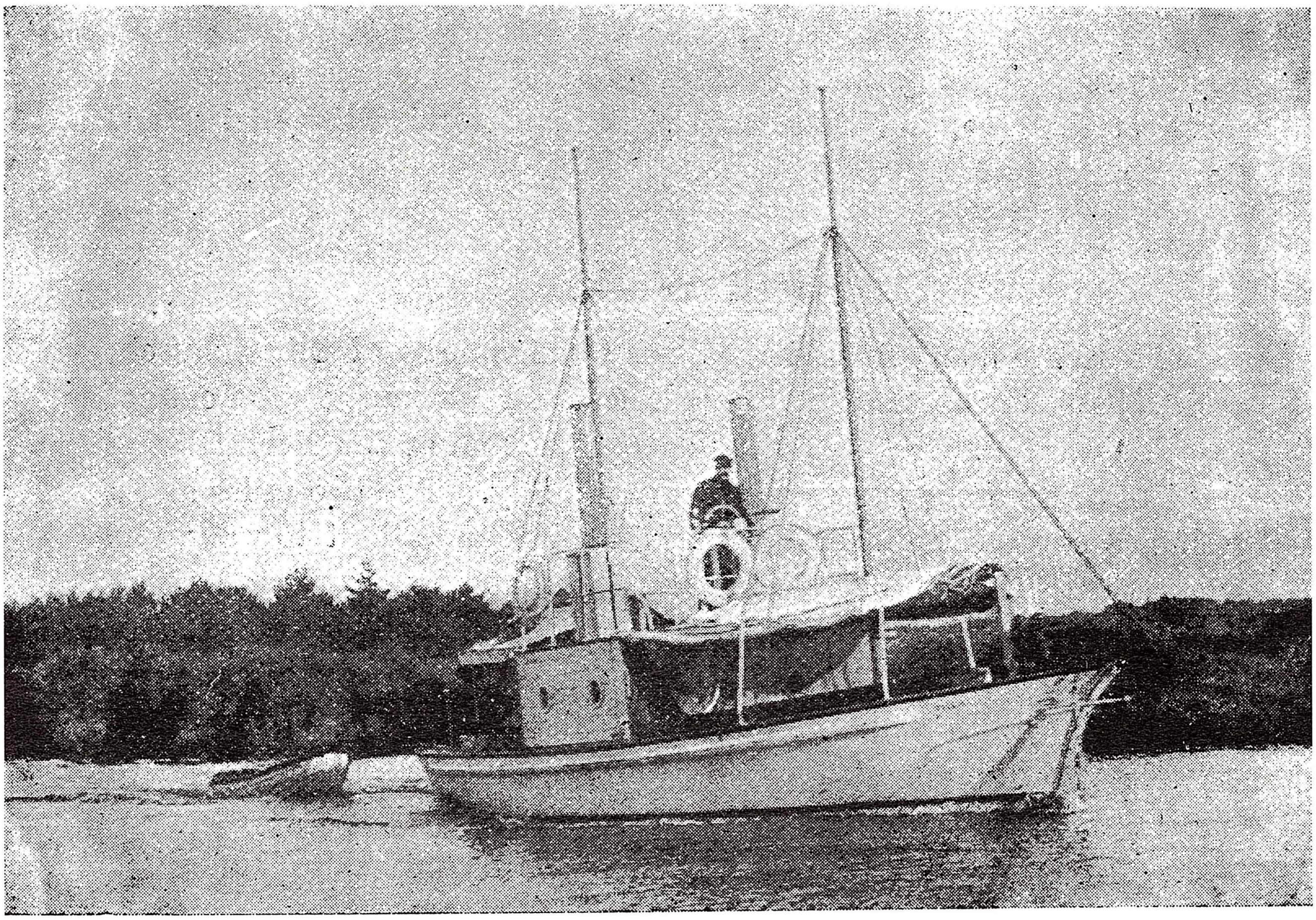
One brief visitor to the New Brighton jetty was the 80 ton ketch *Catherine*, which arrived on May 18, 1894 with a load of timber from the Catlins area in Otago. This included a load of tramway sleepers for the City and Suburban Tramway Company's line which was being built along Marine Parade and was opened later that year. On her return voyage the *Catherine* was lost off Banks Peninsula with her crew of six and one passenger.



Passengers waiting on the New Brighton jetty, about to board the Nautilus, *for a trip along the Avon. Pleasure craft belonging to members of the New Brighton Power Boat Club are moored on the far bank. The original tramway bridge is to be seen in the background.* *Photograph: Peter Dunbar.*



Harry Hawker's Nautilus, *cruising on the Estuary.* *Photograph: Mrs Mavis Smith.*



THE MOTOR LAUNCH

"Tuariki"

16 H.P. TWIN SCREW.
(Weather Permitting)

Will run on THURSDAYS and SUNDAYS between NEW BRIGHTON and SUMNER as per time table below —

WEEK DAY:

THURSDAY—Leaves Brighton	..	11 a.m.	1 p.m.	3 p.m.
,, Leaves Sumner	..	12 noon	2 p.m.	4 p.m.

SUNDAY:

Leaves Brighton	.. .. ..	11 a.m.	1 p.m.	3 p.m.
Leaves Sumner ..	.. .. ..	12 a.m.	2 p.m.	4 p.m.

The Launch may be engaged on other days privately.

Afternoon Tea may be given on board, and arrangements made with the Manager.

School Picnics at reasonable rates.

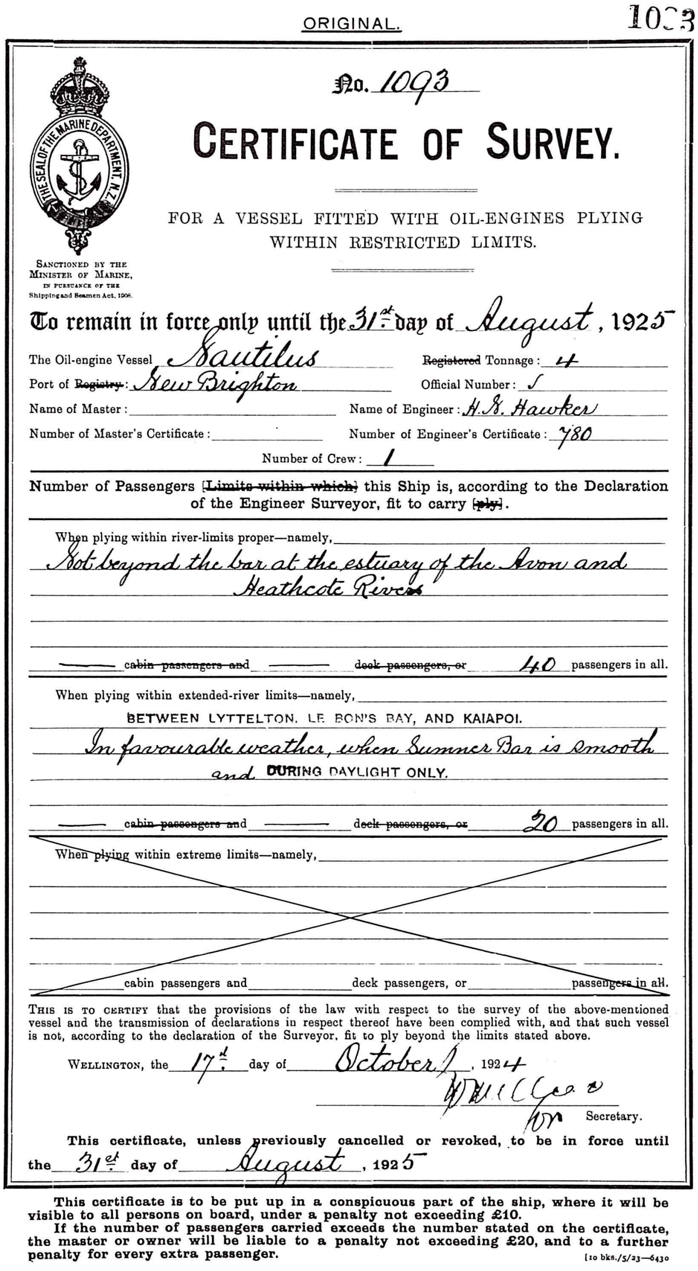
When the tide runs towards Christchurch the launch leaves Shag Rock jetty, when running to sea Cave Rock jetty.

NOTICE.—Passengers coming down on bicycles and not wishing to take them on board, may leave same in my yard free, third house down Wilson Street from wharf. Passengers with TRAPS AND HORSES may leave same in one of my paddocks, charge 6d., same place as bikes.

FARES—6d. Single; 1s. Return. Bicycles, 6d.

H. R. WALKER, MANAGER.

An advertisement from a guide book of the 1920s. Courtesy W de Thier.



ORIGINAL. 1093

No. 1093

CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY.

FOR A VESSEL FITTED WITH OIL-ENGINES PLYING WITHIN RESTRICTED LIMITS.

SANCTIONED BY THE MINISTER OF MARINE, IN PURSUANCE OF THE Shipping and Seamen Act, 1908.

To remain in force only until the 31st day of August, 1925

The Oil-engine Vessel Nautilus
~~Registered~~ Tonnage: 4
Port of ~~Registry~~: New Brighton
Official Number: 5
Name of Master:
Name of Engineer: H. S. Hawker
Number of Master's Certificate:
Number of Engineer's Certificate: 780
Number of Crew: 1

Number of Passengers [~~Limits within which~~] this Ship is, according to the Declaration of the Engineer Surveyor, fit to carry [~~ply~~].

When plying within river-limits proper—namely,
Not beyond the bar at the estuary of the Avon and Heathcote Rivers
— ~~cabin passengers and~~ — ~~deck passengers, or~~ 40 passengers in all.

When plying within extended-river limits—namely,
BETWEEN LYTTELTON, LE BON'S BAY, AND KAIAPOI.
In favourable weather, when Sumner Bar is smooth and DURING DAYLIGHT ONLY.
— ~~cabin passengers and~~ — ~~deck passengers, or~~ 20 passengers in all.

When plying within extreme limits—namely,
cabin passengers and deck passengers, or passengers in all.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the provisions of the law with respect to the survey of the above-mentioned vessel and the transmission of declarations in respect thereof have been complied with, and that such vessel is not, according to the declaration of the Surveyor, fit to ply beyond the limits stated above.

WELLINGTON, the 17th day of October, 1924

for Secretary.

This certificate, unless previously cancelled or revoked, to be in force until the 31st day of August, 1925

This certificate is to be put up in a conspicuous part of the ship, where it will be visible to all persons on board, under a penalty not exceeding £10.

If the number of passengers carried exceeds the number stated on the certificate, the master or owner will be liable to a penalty not exceeding £20, and to a further penalty for every extra passenger.

[10 bks./5/23—6430

Certificate of Survey for the Nautilus. *Besides being used locally,* Nautilus *saw active service in the First World War, ferrying sick and wounded soldiers from the beaches of Gallipoli to the hospital ship* Marama.
Courtesy: Mrs Mavis Smith.

Avon postscript

Although commercial use of the river had ceased many years before, navigation influenced events on the river into the 1930s. In 1923 there was an urgent need to replace the New Brighton Tramway Bridge, and the local bodies concerned held meetings to determine the final design. A reinforced concrete bridge was designed by Messrs Toogood and Jones. It could carry the Tramway Board's 40 ton water tank tram, which was used to flush out the pointwork on the tracks.

A reduction in the length of the bridge from 94 feet to 74 feet, saving £1,200 in construction, was approved by the Marine Department. The total estimated cost of £6,500 was to be shared by local bodies on the following basis: the New Brighton Borough Council and the Christchurch Tramway Board were each to pay thirty three and one third per cent, while the Heathcote County Council and the Christchurch City Council were each to pay sixteen and two thirds per cent.

The Brighton Power Boat Club, at its Annual Meeting on September 29, 1923, passed the following resolution, in respect to the new bridge across the Avon: "That being a tidal river sufficient clearance must be provided for the passage of boats at high water". The club considered that the present bridge was adequate at normal tides but that the new one should be higher. This resolution was conveyed to the Christchurch City Council. The club again protested to the Council in 1926 for doing nothing to amend the clearance of the proposed bridge.

The club was supported by the United Burgesses Association, which considered that the clearance of four feet at high tide would "needlessly block up the river", and "deprive the city of direct communication with the sea." The Association then set about obtaining a legal opinion regarding the blocking of a tidal waterway.

Just hours before the bridge contract was to be signed in 1927, a Christchurch tailor, R B Owen, took legal action, challenging the authority of the Governor-General to approve a structure which would constitute a nuisance to users of the river. Owen was such a staunch fighter for the Avon and improvements to the river banks that many Christchurch people suggested that his initials, R.B. must stand for "River Bank". He fought under the banner of the "River Improvement Fund".

Owen was successful in his action in the Supreme Court, but this decision was overturned by the Court of Appeal. He was granted leave to take the case to the Privy Council. In the meantime, however, the Government became convinced that the erection of the bridge, as planned, was undesirable, and withdrew its approval.

The Christchurch City Council was in favour of increasing the clearance of the bridge to six feet six inches at high water. The New Brighton Borough Council agreed, provided it did not have to meet any extra cost. The Brighton Power Boat Club agreed that the new clearance would be acceptable to its members.

In a warrant, signed on June 4, 1930, by the Governor-General, approval was given for the construction of the New Brighton bridge. The New Brighton Borough Council was instructed to pay £4,204 towards the cost, the Heathcote County Council's share was set at £390, and the balance was met by the Christchurch City Council. R.B. Owen was unsuccessful in his attempt to have the Christchurch City Council reimburse him for his legal costs.

The bridge was opened in 1931.

History repeated itself in 1939, but not so dramatically, when the replacement for the Bower Bridge was discussed.

Once again the Brighton Power Boat Club wrote to the Christchurch City Council requesting an assurance that the clearance would allow the passage of pleasure craft on the river. The council assured them that the clearance on the proposed bridge would be the same as that on the New Brighton Bridge, six feet six inches above Mean High Water.

It must be remembered that at the time both these bridges were rebuilt, there was no commercial traffic on the river and that all the increased costs were incurred to meet the needs of the owners of pleasure craft.

the New Brighton pier

No story about shipping to New Brighton would be complete without mention of the well-remembered pier on the New Brighton foreshore. The first pile of the pier was driven on May 2, 1891 and work on the structure progressed steadily for about three years. The owners of the steamer *John Anderson* did a great deal to assist the Pier Company in this project, as they were keen to use the pier for excursion trips to New Brighton. On a Sunday in mid-July 1892, the *John Anderson* made its first trip to New Brighton, watched by hundreds of excited residents on the Esplanade. The vessel lay off the end of the pier about 600 feet from high water mark. The soundings taken proved that, if the pier was extended out to 700 feet the steamer would be able to come alongside.[58]

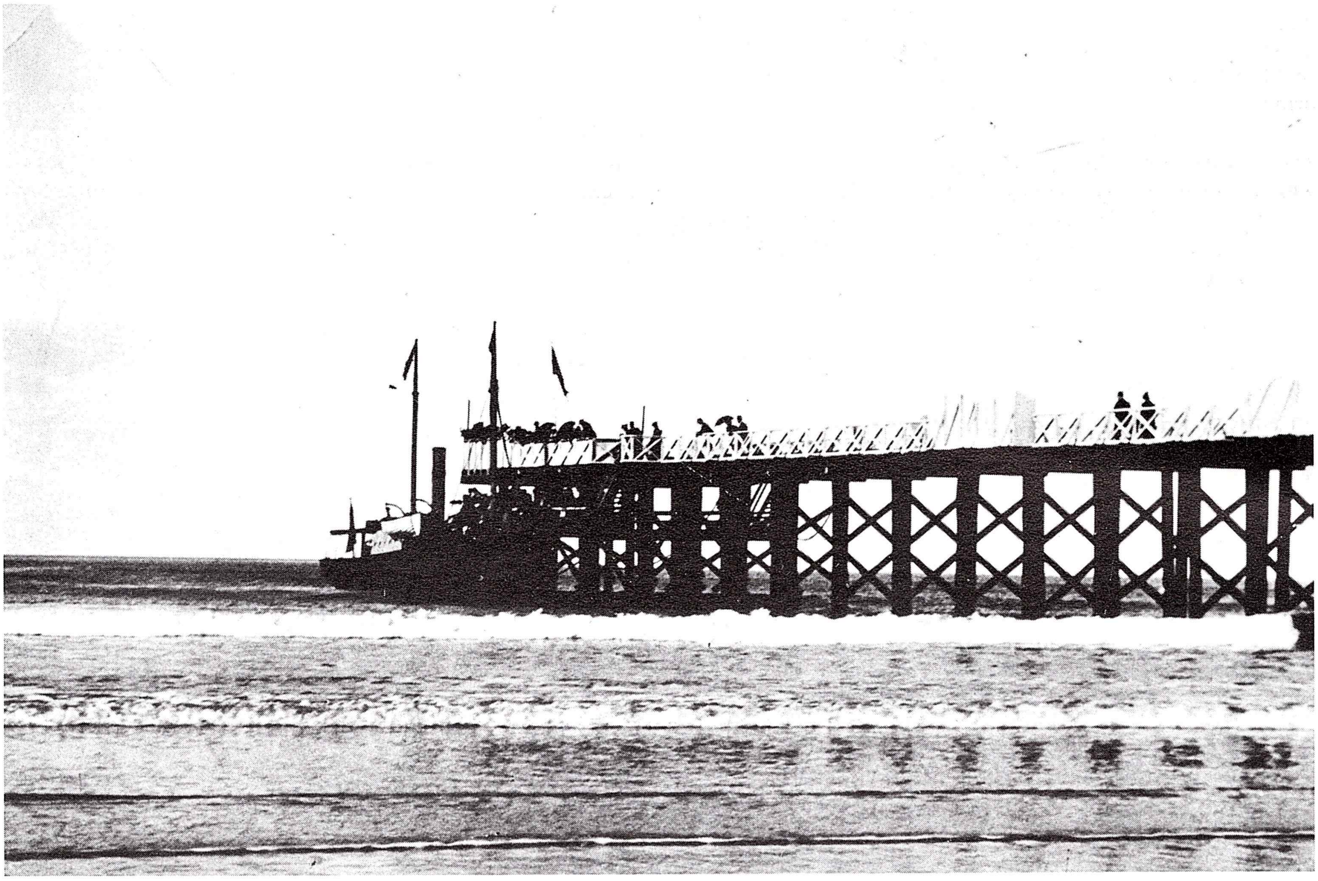
The "Lyttelton Times" of October 1893 carried an advertisement to the effect that the *John Anderson* would sail from Lyttelton for New Brighton after the arrival of the 1.00pm train from Christchurch. The ship would be back in port in time for passengers to catch the 5.30pm train back to town. This appears to be a rather round about way of travelling from Christchurch to New Brighton but it was history in the making. Although the pier was only 560 feet long at that time, an attempt would be made to come alongside, if the tide and weather permitted.

About 100 passengers took advantage of the trip. Unfortunately, by the time the *John Anderson* arrived off the pier at 3.30pm the tide was ebbing and the rough sea running at the time made it unsafe for the steamer to tie up. However, the captain did bring the bow of the vessel close enough to the pier to enable two or three adventurous persons to jump across to ropes dangled from the pier, thus establishing the first sea communications with New Brighton.

Work on the pier advanced steadily and the structure was opened on January 18, 1894. In the early years, several small steamers ran excursions from Lyttelton to the pier. Besides the *John Anderson*, vessels on this run included the *Purau*, *Cygnet* and the *Jane Douglas*. On these occasions the vessels were decked out in flags and made an impressive sight as they approached. Steamers wishing to tie up at the pier and land passengers, when the tide and weather were suitable, would sound their whistles so that someone would be ready to handle the mooring lines as they came alongside. The shipping service did not last for many years.

A further attraction was added with the opening of the Pier Tea Rooms on September 19, 1907. Large windows all around gave patrons a great view of the coastline to Sumner and the Lyttelton Heads.

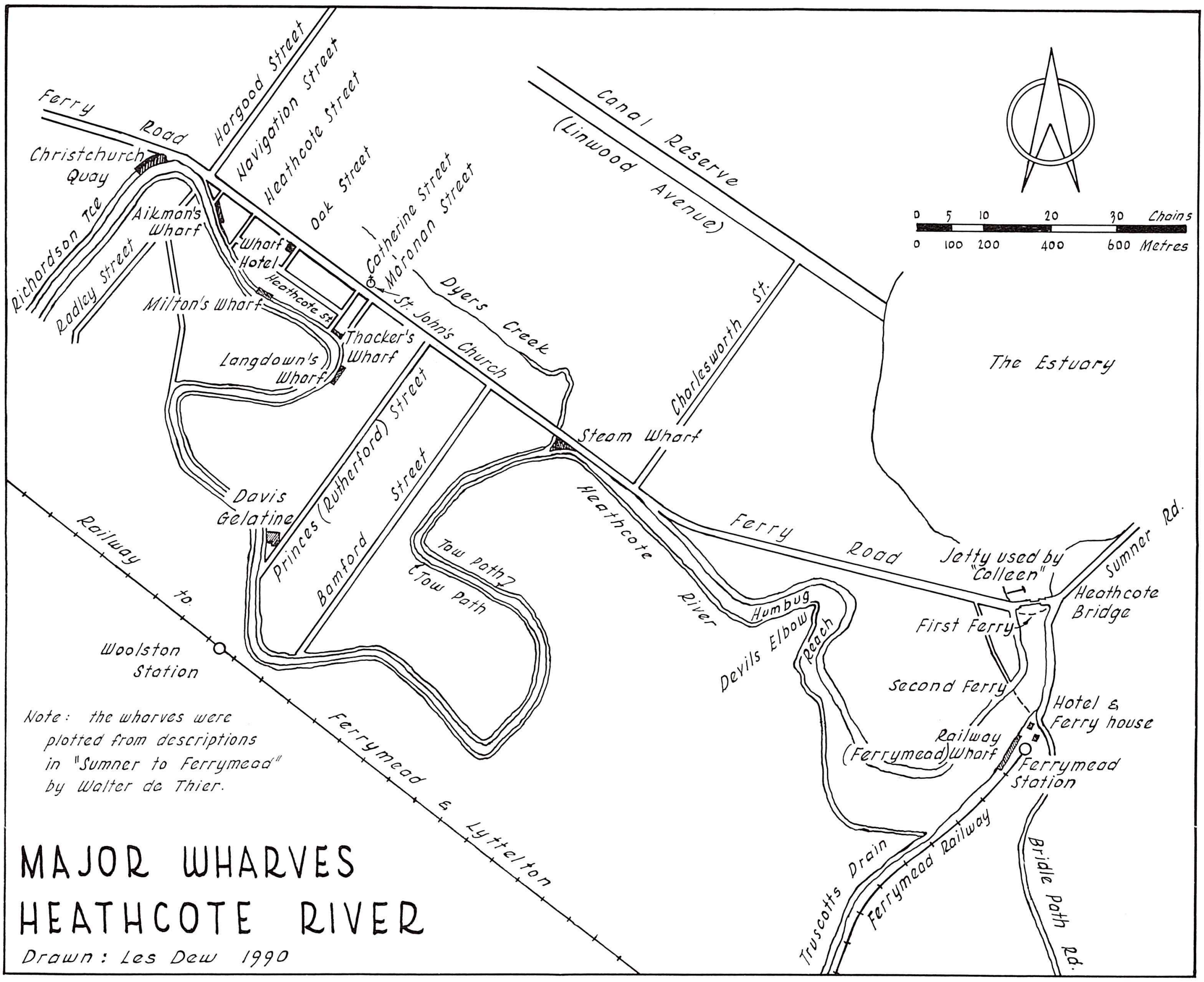
The pier lasted until 1965 when years of neglect meant that it was no longer safe. During its life span it had been a popular facility for the people of Christchurch, for taking in the fresh sea air and fishing.



A steamer, most probably the John Anderson, *moored at the New Brighton Pier.*

Photograph: Peter Dunbar, Courtesy Pegasus Post.

transport on the Heathcote


MAJOR WHARVES
HEATHCOTE RIVER
Drawn: Les Dew 1990

Note: the wharves were plotted from descriptions in "Sumner to Ferrymead" by Walter de Thier.

Early Europeans had three attempts at naming the Heathcote River. Firstly, the Opawa, later the Serpentine. The present name of Heathcote was bestowed in honour of Sir William Heathcote, a member of the Canterbury Association.

The Maoris had names for several reaches of the river. The two sections relative to this book were O Hika Paruparu (the muddy fishing place) for the reaches near the Estuary, and O Pa Waho (the outward or seaward pa) for the section flowing through the present suburb of Opawa.

We have seen how the early settlers began shipping their goods by way of the Heathcote. In this section we trace the development of this trade and the many wharves which were built along the river banks and in the Estuary.

The early settlers had been dismayed by the cost of shipping their possessions to the new town of Christchurch. However, as more vessels entered the trade on the Heathcote, the competition forced the prices down. In March 1853 a four-boat syndicate was formed which offered cheaper through-rates by ship and dray from Lyttelton to Christchurch via the Heathcote River and Ferry Road. The rate for the journey was 32/– a ton. The four vessels in this syndicate were, the *General Palmer* (an 18 ton schooner owned by David Strickland), the *Kaka* (owned by Andrew Swanson), the *Rover* (owned by Captain Bannister) and the *Palinurus* (a 20 ton schooner owned by Robert Greaves). The *Palinurus* was wrecked on the Sumner Bar in May 1865.

Steam made its first, though brief, appearance on the Heathcote with the arrival of the *Alma* from Melbourne via Wellington, on November 23, 1855. The 37 ton steamer, built of iron, was 85 feet long and was capable of carrying 45 tons of cargo. Her first trip for her new owner, J E Thacker, was from Lyttelton to the Heathcote on December 10. Sailing at 2.00pm the trip took two and a half hours, including a stop at the Sumner Bar, waiting to pick up the pilot, George Day. Despite rough weather, she was able to return to Lyttelton that night.

Two more trips were made to the Heathcote before the *Alma* sailed for Kaiapoi on December 14, to lift two dray loads of wool from the Teviotdale Station. Two days later she made a further trip to Kaiapoi to load wool. On December 17, she ran to Pigeon Bay to mark the anniversary of the settlement.

The newspapers praised her achievements and hoped that, besides carrying cargo, she would make frequent trips to the townships and bays of the province.

Thacker soon found that running the steamer was an expensive business and, after only two weeks operations, he was forced to seek financial assistance from the Provincial Government. This assistance took the form of a mortgage of £1,000 for a period of twelve months at 10% interest.

Bad luck followed on January 9, 1856, when the *Alma* grounded between Cave Rock and Beacon Rock and filled with water. Thacker faced severe criticism for abandoning his vessel but, in fact, he had no money to undertake the salvage. As mortgagors, the Provincial Government took possession of the vessel, advising Thacker that he would be liable for £500 if the salvage was successful.

The Provincial Government entered into a contract with Messrs Gubb and Allen for salvage of the *Alma*. Regardless of the outcome, the contractors would receive £120, with a further £475 if the operation was successful. An additional £200 would be paid if the vessel was delivered to Lyttelton.

Although the *Alma* was undamaged structurally, it was well sanded in on the Bar before salvage work started. Punts were lashed to either side of the vessel with chains passed under the stern. In theory, as the punts rose on the tide, they would lift the *Alma*. The same operation would then be used to lift the bow. As it happened, however, the chains cut through the bottom of the *Alma* making further salvage work impossible. The wreck was sold and some of the equipment was salvaged. The Provincial Government refused Thacker any assistance and the salvage contractors, having spent £244/8/7d, found themselves well out of pocket.[59]

In December 1856 the Provincial Government called tenders for two vessels capable of carrying 40 tons of cargo between the Avon River, Kaiapoi, Akaroa and Timaru. They were to be powered by engines of not less than 20 horsepower and to draw no more than four feet six inches. The successful tenderer would receive a three year contract and £5,000 without interest, plus a fixed annual bonus. If the service proved satisfactory a further three year contract would be available.

In 1857, two new vessels entered the trade to Christchurch Quay. Christchurch Quay, situated at the corner of Ferry Road and Richardson Terrace, was the closest of the Heathcote wharves to the centre of the town. These vessels were the *Oliver Lang* and the *Lucy James*, the latter, a 32 ton schooner capable of carrying a greater cargo than the regular vessels on the run.

The "Lyttelton Times" of February 21, 1857, records that these vessels were not popular among the seamen on the regular boats. The crews of the two vessels experienced difficulty in negotiating the unfamiliar contortions of the Heathcote River. At first the local seamen took pity on their plight and agreed to pilot them up to Christchurch Quay. But when they saw the amount of cargo the vessels were carrying, and the amount of return cargo waiting for them, they refused to pilot the vessels on the return down river. The fate of the vessels on the return journey is not recorded but these boats disappeared from the local trade.

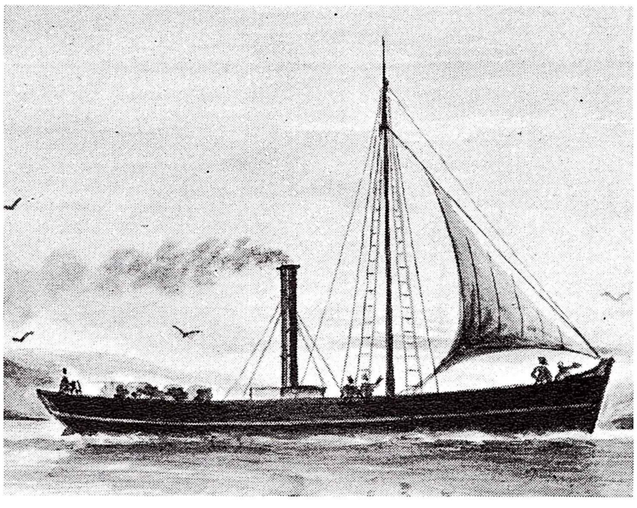
This led to the establishment of the Canterbury Steam Navigation Company, and by March 9, 1858, their 45 ton wooden paddle-steamer *Planet*, powered by a 45 horsepower engine, was in service. She made regular trips between Kaiapoi, Lyttelton, Christchurch Quay (in the Heathcote) and the bays of Banks Peninsula, including a weekly trip to Akaroa. Freight charges between Lyttelton and Christchurch Quay were: 20/– for general cargo, 8/– per bale of wool, 15/– per sack of grain, and passengers at 2/6d per head. These charges were about twice those charged by the sailing ships.

Planet made 52 trips across the Bar in 1858, often towing becalmed sailing ships at 2/– a time. In addition she made 15 trips to Kaiapoi, 47 to Pigeon Bay, four to Akaroa and two to Governors Bay. In her first year of service she made a profit of £613. Despite an increase in sailings up the Heathcote in 1859 the Company found that trade between Lyttelton and Christchurch was bad, due to competition from other vessels.

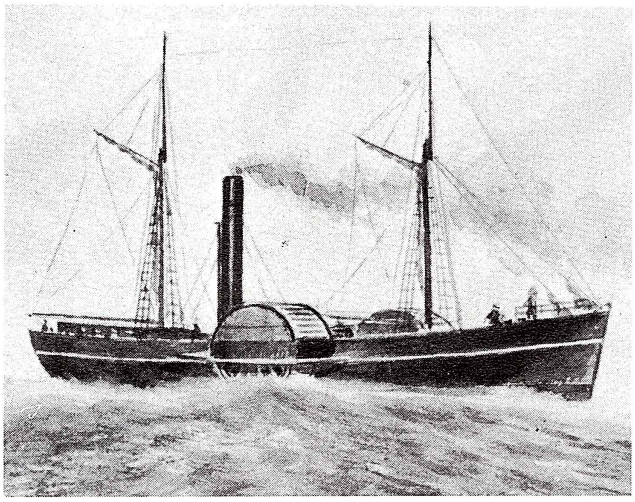
In April 1859 *Planet* started a weekly service to Akaroa on Wednesdays. However, the Canterbury Steam Navigation Company was headed for bad times. In 1859 *Planet* lost £243 and the owners, faced with the expenditure of £500 for a new boiler, decided to lay the vessel up at Lyttelton. There she stayed until a new owner was found in 1862 and the vessel was taken away to Dunedin.

To make matters worse the Canterbury Steam Navigation Company had ordered a new paddle-steamer from England. This was the 78 ton *Lyttelton* which had wide hatches for stowing bulky cargo and ample deck room. She was built in the same ship-yard as the mighty *Great Eastern* and it was jokingly said that she was built out of the chips from the larger vessel.

Lyttelton left England in September 1859 on her delivery voyage and, for a long time no word was heard from her. Grave fears were held for the safety of the steamer and her twelve crew members.



The ill-fated Alma. *After only four weeks in service, she grounded on the Sumner Bar and was a complete loss.*
H C Berry, courtesy J D Wilkinson.



The paddle-steamer Planet *which ran many local services for the Canterbury Steam Navigation Company.*

H C Berry, courtesy J D Wilkinson.

At a special meeting, a decision was made to wind up the company which could no longer trade successfully. It was also decided that the steamer *Lyttelton* would be declined in the unlikely event of her arrival.

After a voyage of 462 days, *Lyttelton* arrived at Wellington on November 28, 1860 under the command of Captain Coleman. She had encountered rough seas for most of the voyage and had suffered considerable damage. In one storm, she was forced to heave-to in a westerly gale off Cape Leeuwin, Australia. She drifted stern first towards her destination, covering 104 miles in 24 hours, the fastest time made on her delivery voyage.

Whilst the arrival of the *Lyttelton* was greeted with relief that her crew were safe, it was also a time of some embarrassment. Her chief engineer, Mr Alex Brown, summed it up by saying, "Nobody expected us, nobody wanted us, we had been given up for lost and the insurance had been paid". In addition, the company, for whom she had been built had gone into liquidation.

Within a month of her arrival at Lyttelton on January 27, 1861 she had been sold to new owners and was used successfully on the Kaiapoi to Wellington run. Although she made good money in this trade she was later lured south into the Otago gold rush trade.

A further vessel arrived in February 1861. She was the 19 ton screw steamer *Expert* which saw use around the harbour. Capable of carrying 24 passengers and 10 tons of cargo, she visited Pigeon Bay twice a week on the Peninsula mail run.

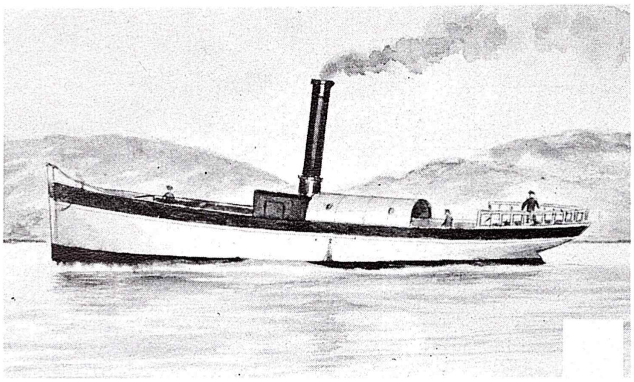
Many small steamers entered the Heathcote trade at this time. The best known were the *Gazelle*, a 46 ton screw steamer, *Novelty*, a 53 ton paddle-steamer, *Maid of the Yarra*, a 156 ton steamer, *Moa* an 84 ton steamer and the *Mullogh*, a 46 ton screw steamer. The *Mullogh* was perhaps the most famous steamer to enter the Heathcote and her exploits will be told in the chapter dealing with the Railway Wharf.

The result of all these vessels entering the service was fierce competition. Freight rates were lowered by about a third and many of the vessels sailed with their holds just over half full. On the other hand, expenses were high. For example, the cost of running the *Mullogh* was £100 per month plus insurance. It is little wonder that these vessels were also used on the more lucrative trips to Banks Peninsula and North Canterbury.

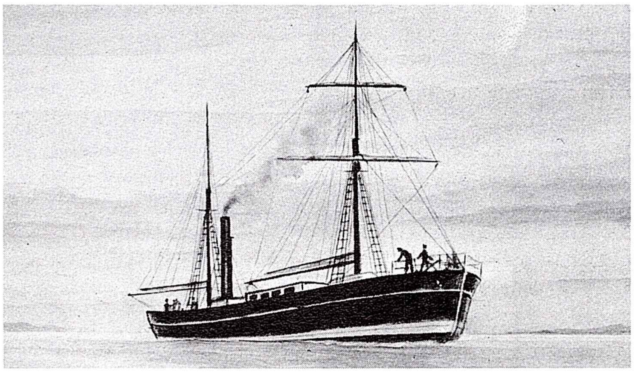
The importance of these small vessels, of less than 100 tons, can be judged by the following statistics. By 1870 arrivals by those ships entering Lyttelton Harbour had increased from 40 to more than 500 annually. By 1875 this figure had dropped to 164. The local trade around the various Canterbury ports is illustrated by the shipping figures for 1868. Arrivals at Lyttelton totalled 954 that year. Of those, 198 came from eleven different bays on Banks Peninsula, 45 from Saltwater Creek, 129 from Kaiapoi and 32 from the Heathcote. It must be remembered that the Lyttelton Railway had just been opened and that the railway to North Canterbury had not been built. Prior to the opening of the Lyttelton Tunnel, 50 vessels a month were making the passage from Lyttelton to the Heathcote.[60]

The "reliable and regular" services promised by the ship owners were often interrupted by bad weather and the withdrawal of vessels for repairs following strandings or other mishaps. Before 1853, ten vessels had been wrecked around Banks Peninsula or on the Sumner Bar. A further 39 met the same fate between 1853 and 1876. To this figure must be added the numerous strandings where vessels were left high and dry for days waiting for a suitable tide for re-floating.

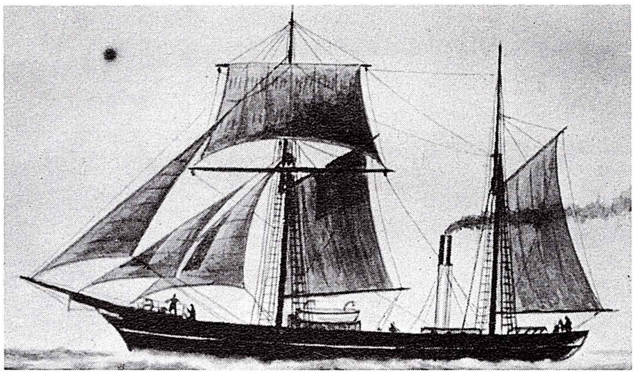
The opening of the Lyttelton Tunnel did not prove to be the complete answer to Christchurch's transport problems. The port facilities at Lyttelton were slow to develop. By 1872, congestion at the port was so great that the merchants of Christchurch were becoming angry at the delay in cargo handling. This became so bad that, in 1873, the Provincial Government seriously considered re-opening the port at Ferrymead and re-establishing the lighter trade across the Bar. Port improvements made this move unnecessary.[61]



Expert. *H. C. Berry*



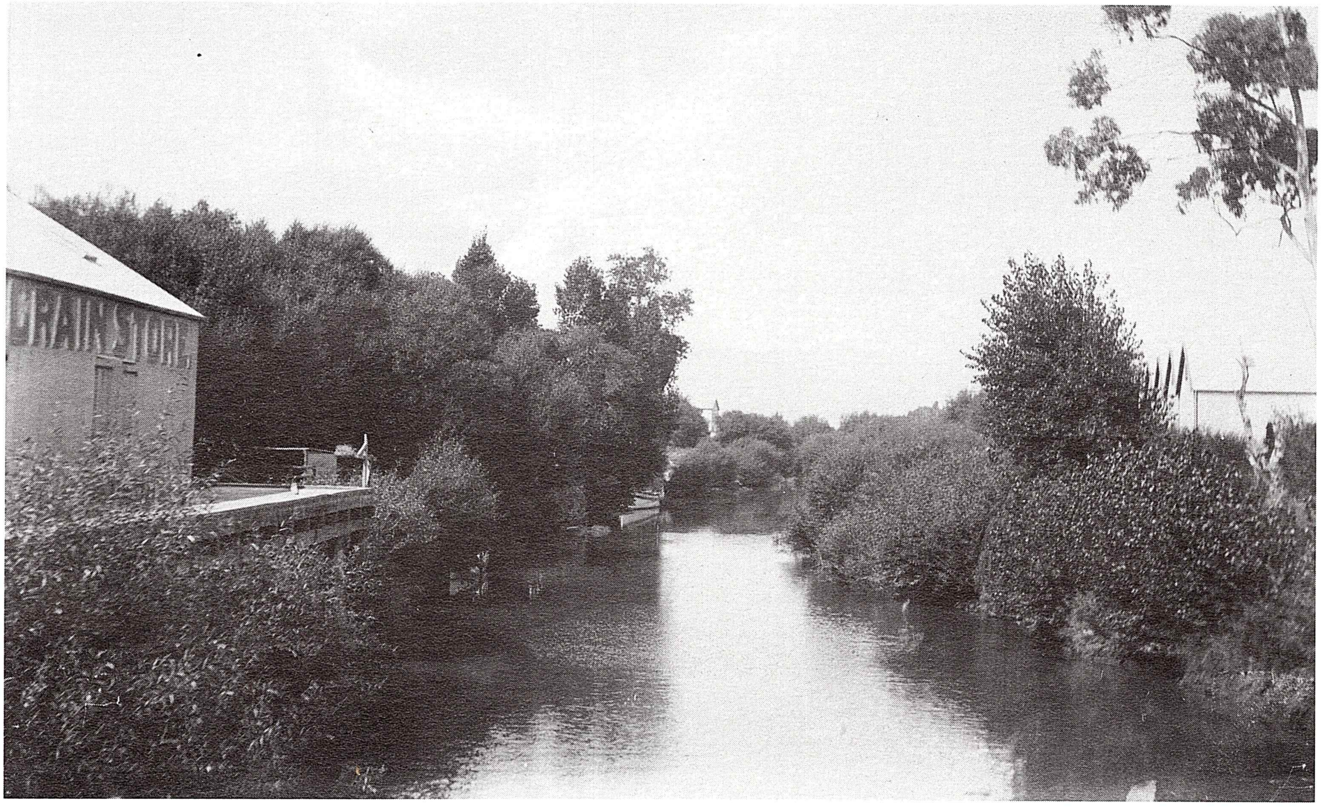
Gazelle. *H. C. Berry*



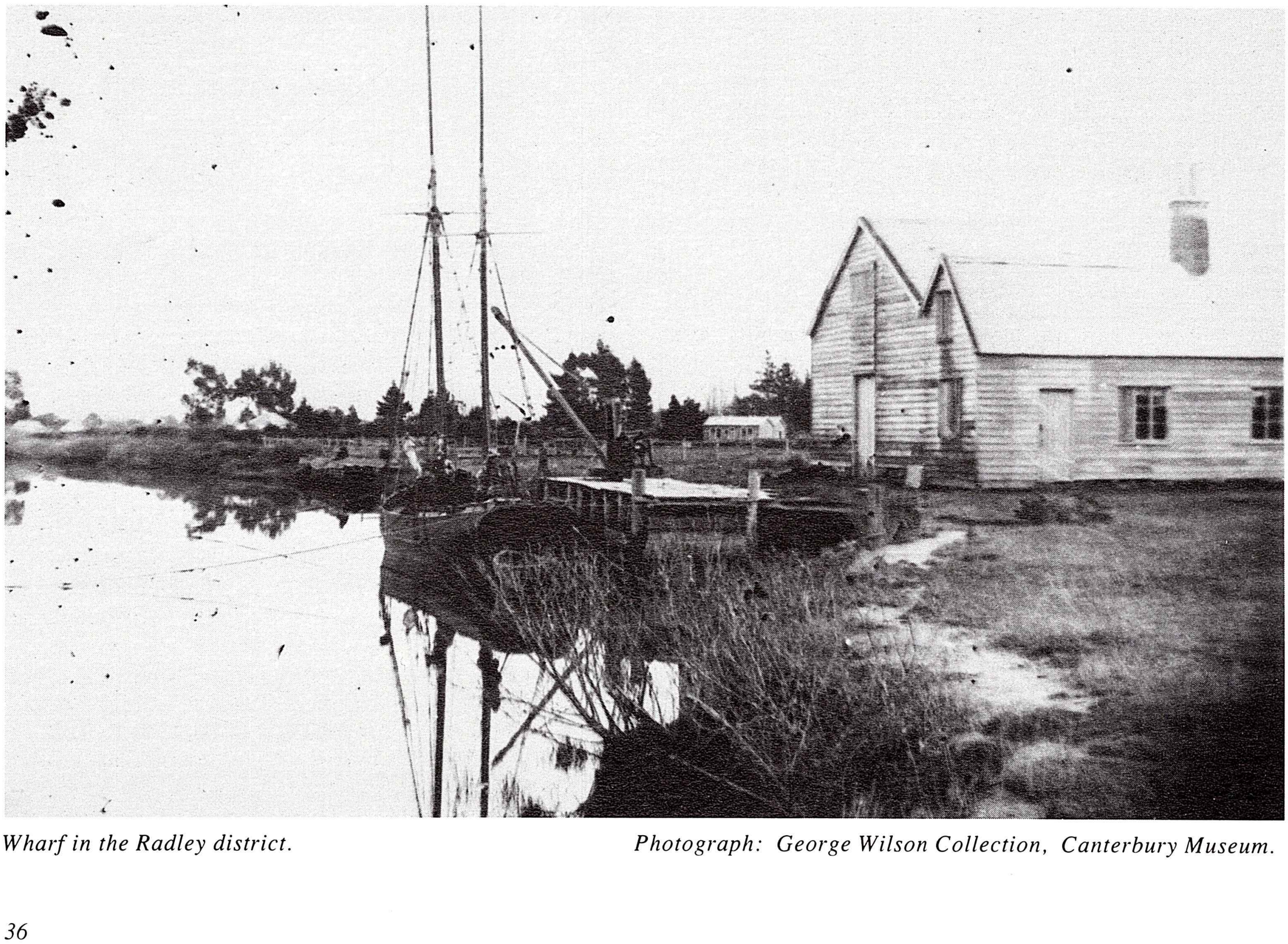
Maid of the Yarra. *H. C. Berry*

Early steamers of the 1860s. These vessels were well known on the Lyttelton - Heathcote River - Banks Peninsula services.
H C Berry, courtesy J D Wilkinson.

wharves along the Heathcote



The Heathcote River at Radley. *Photograph: Canterbury Museum.*



Wharf in the Radley district. *Photograph: George Wilson Collection, Canterbury Museum.*

Being wider, deeper and tidal, the Heathcote soon surpassed the Avon for the transport of goods and, before long, had a collection of wharves and ports along its banks. Upstream from the Heathcote bridge, these were: the Railway Wharf, the Heathcote Wharf, Thacker's Wharf, Milton's Wharf, Langdown's Wharf, Aikman's Wharf and Christchurch Quay.

On the Heathcote River circa 1880. Captain P J Messervey with the Minnie *near the present Radley Bridge.*

Courtesy W de Thier

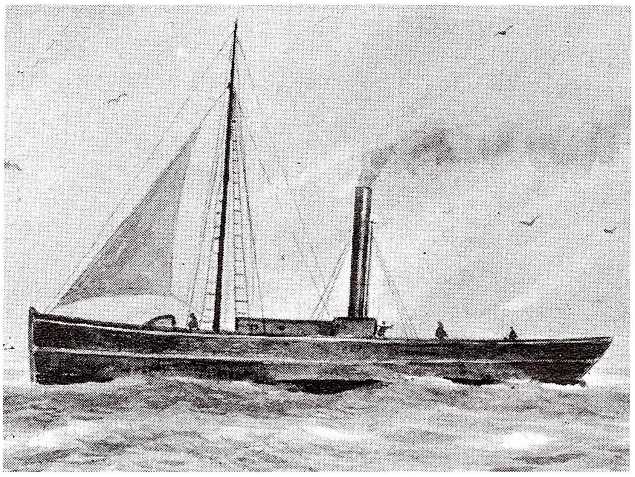
the Railway wharf (Ferrymead)

The Railway Wharf was built at the foot of the hills, just upstream from the Ferry. When it became obvious that the building of the railway tunnel was going to take a long time and the need for a reliable freight service was immediate, the Provincial Government considered temporary methods of freight handling. The idea which won favour was the building of a port in the Estuary with a temporary connection from it to the railway to Lyttelton. This expedient was far from satisfactory, as it still required vessels to cross the Sumner Bar.

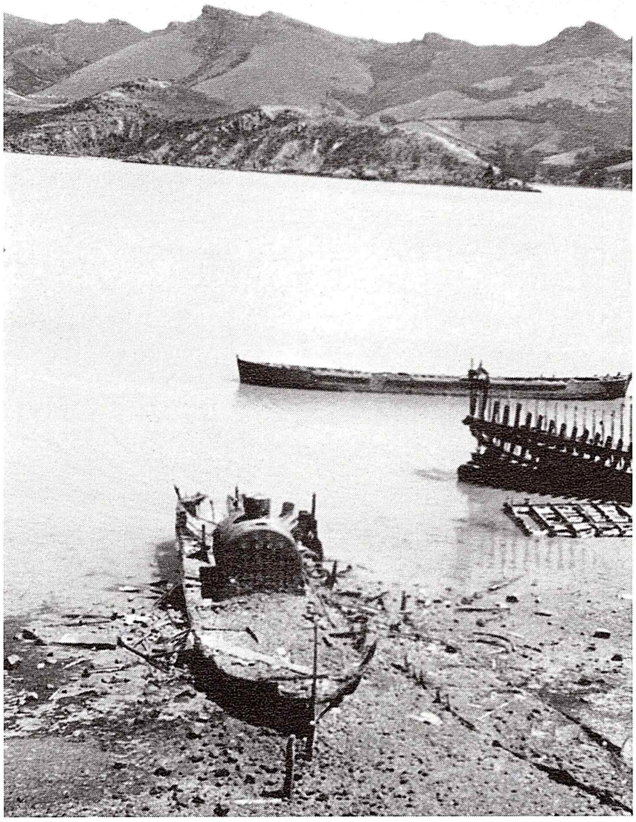
Building the Railway Wharf was included as part of the Christchurch - Lyttelton railway contract, as a place where rails and rolling stock could be unloaded after trans-shipment at Lyttelton. Timber for the wharf was shipped across the Bar and unloaded onto the river bank at high tide. George Holmes, the railway contractor, set to work on constructing the wharf. The going was tough and progress slow, even using a pile driver with a weight of close to one and a half tons and a travel of 12 feet. As a consequence the wharf was only partly completed when the first railway locomotive arrived. The Pilgrim, as she was known, had arrived at Lyttelton on April 27, 1863, aboard the schooner *Choice* from Melbourne.[62] As the *Choice* was too large to enter the Estuary, the locomotive was trans-shipped at Lyttelton. By using the mainyard of an overseas vessel, the *Mermaid*, as a crane, the Pilgrim was transferred to a lighter which was taken in tow by the small steamer *Mullogh*.

An anxious time occurred when an accident aboard the *Mullogh* meant that the two vessels had to put into Port Levy for the night to enable repairs to be carried out. The tow was resumed the next day and, to everybody's relief, the Sumner Bar was cleared without incident. The Pilgrim was landed at the Railway Wharf on May 6, 1863.[63]

By this act the small, ketch-rigged steamer *Mullogh* wrote herself into the transport history of Canterbury. She was built in 1855 and came to Lyttelton in 1859. Among the passengers on that first trip was Edward Green, a telegraph engineer, who had charge of the construction of New Zealand's first telegraph line from Christchurch to Lyttelton, opened on July 1, 1862. Later, Green's son donated the clock towers at Scarborough and New Brighton.[64]



The Mullogh *had a varied career around Lyttelton and the Heathcote River. She is best known for towing the barge containing Pilgrim, the first steam locomotive for the Christchurch – Lyttelton and Ferrymead Railways.*
H C Berry, courtesy J D Wilkinson.



Perhaps the most famous of the small vessels in the Lyttelton to Heathcote trade was the Mullogh. *She is seen here, in 1990, with her boiler still intact, quietly rusting away in the ship's graveyard, off the western end of Quail Island. The outline of the steam launch* Lyttelton *rusted down to beach level, can just be seen to the right of the* Mullogh.
Photograph: Les Dew

In 1865 she was nearly wrecked on the Sumner Bar and was deliberately run ashore to save her cargo. She was then sold to George Holmes, who refitted her and used her until 1869, following the completion of his railway contract on the Lyttelton line. Another cargo of note carried by the *Mullogh* was the statue of John Robert Godley, which now stands in Cathedral Square.[65]

She was later to play many roles around Lyttelton Harbour – fishing vessel, tug and general cargo ship – before being finally laid to rest in the ships' graveyard, just west of Quail Island, in 1916. She remains there to this day.

One of the great advantages of these small river craft was that they could be run up on the beach when repairs were necessary. On one occasion the *Mullogh* was run up on the river bank at Humbug Reach so that her main shaft could be repaired. On another occasion she was run ashore in Lyttelton Harbour so that a new propeller could be fitted. On each occasion she was floated off again on the next high tide.

During the construction of the tunnel, the Railway Wharf was a busy place, with rolling stock and tunnelling materials being unloaded. As this made up the bulk of the cargo, control of the wharf was placed in the hands of the contractors, Holmes and Company. Even after the line was opened the Provincial Government gave the contractors the responsibility of running both the railway and the wharf.

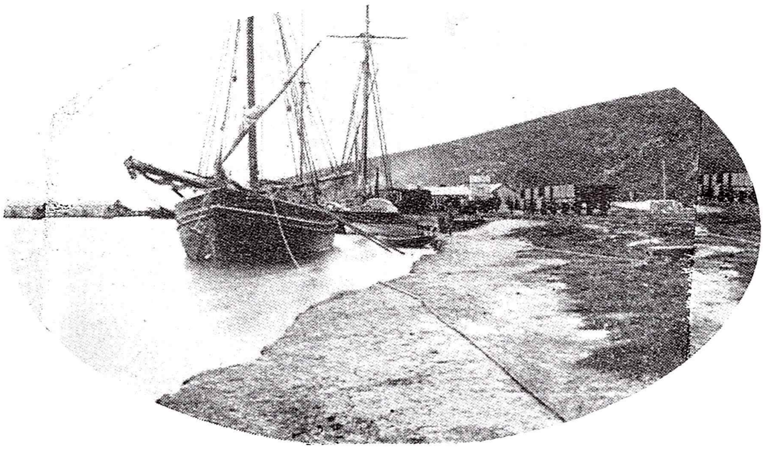
With the opening of the line on December 1, 1863, George Holmes was able to advertise that goods would be accepted at the shipside at Lyttelton and forwarded to Christchurch by steam lighter and railway for 14/– a ton.[66] From that time onward, a variety of goods flowed across the wharf for transshipment to Christchurch.

Trade was not all one way as much produce, chiefly wool, was railed to Ferrymead for shipment to Lyttelton for export to the world markets. Trade across the Bar still had its mishaps, however. In February 1864 the paddle- steamer *Augusta* hit a rock and sank on the Bar only three weeks after entering service. Fortunately, she was later re-floated.

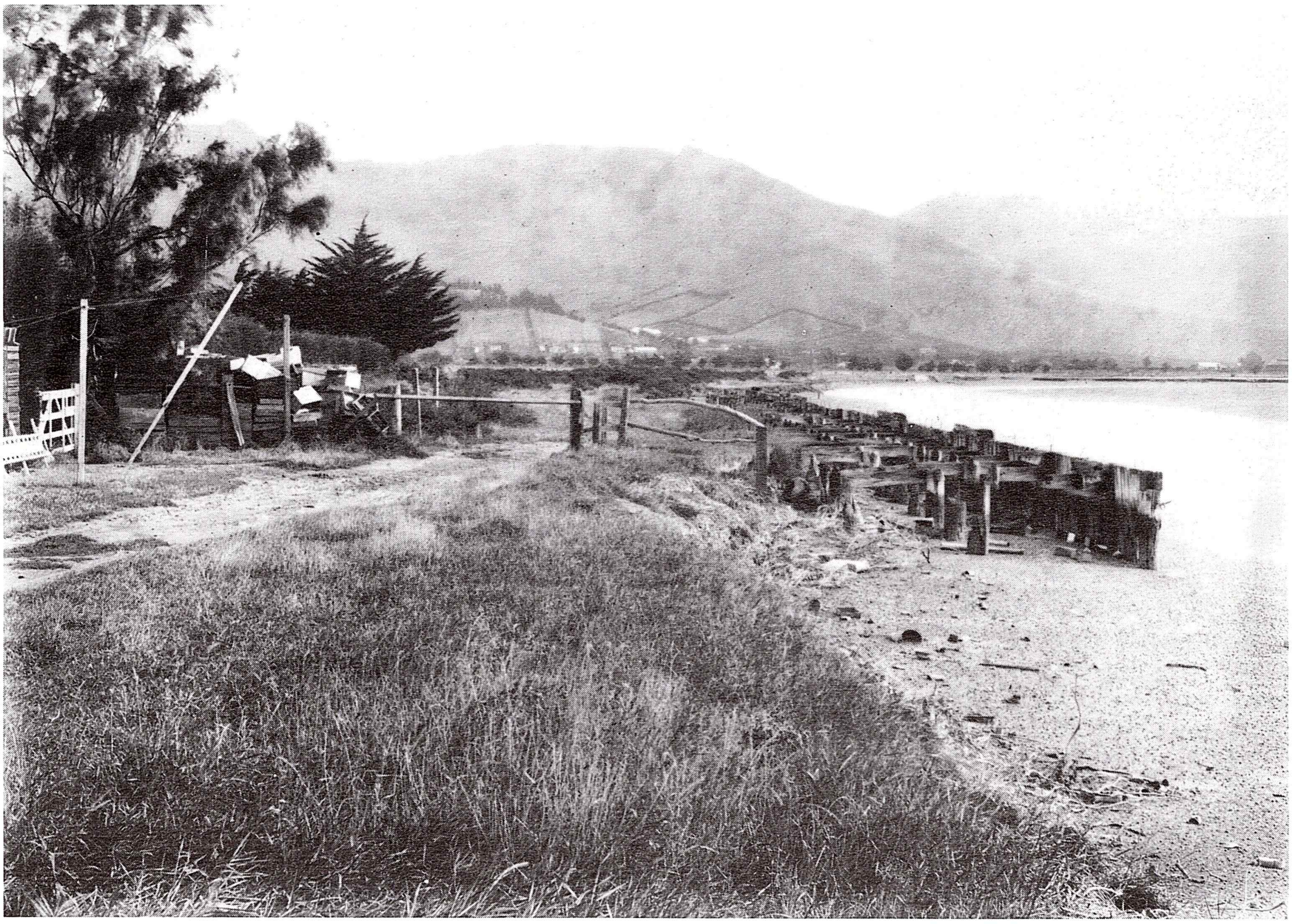
Ferrymead, the terminus of New Zealand's first steam-powered railway, was, for a time, a very important place. The station consisted of a passenger platform, waiting room, booking office and refreshment room. Alongside the station an hotel was built for the convenience of the travellers.[67]

By April 1864 the Railway Wharf was 330 feet long and had a corrugated iron goods shed. A donkey engine located on the river bank supplied steam to three cranes on the wharf. Although this wharf gave great service to the people of Canterbury, it was only a temporary expedient. Once the Christchurch - Lyttelton railway was opened, on December 9, 1867 the flow of trade through Ferrymead declined rapidly. The railway closed in 1877 and the station buildings were removed for use at other stations. The wharf fell into disrepair and soon became unusable.

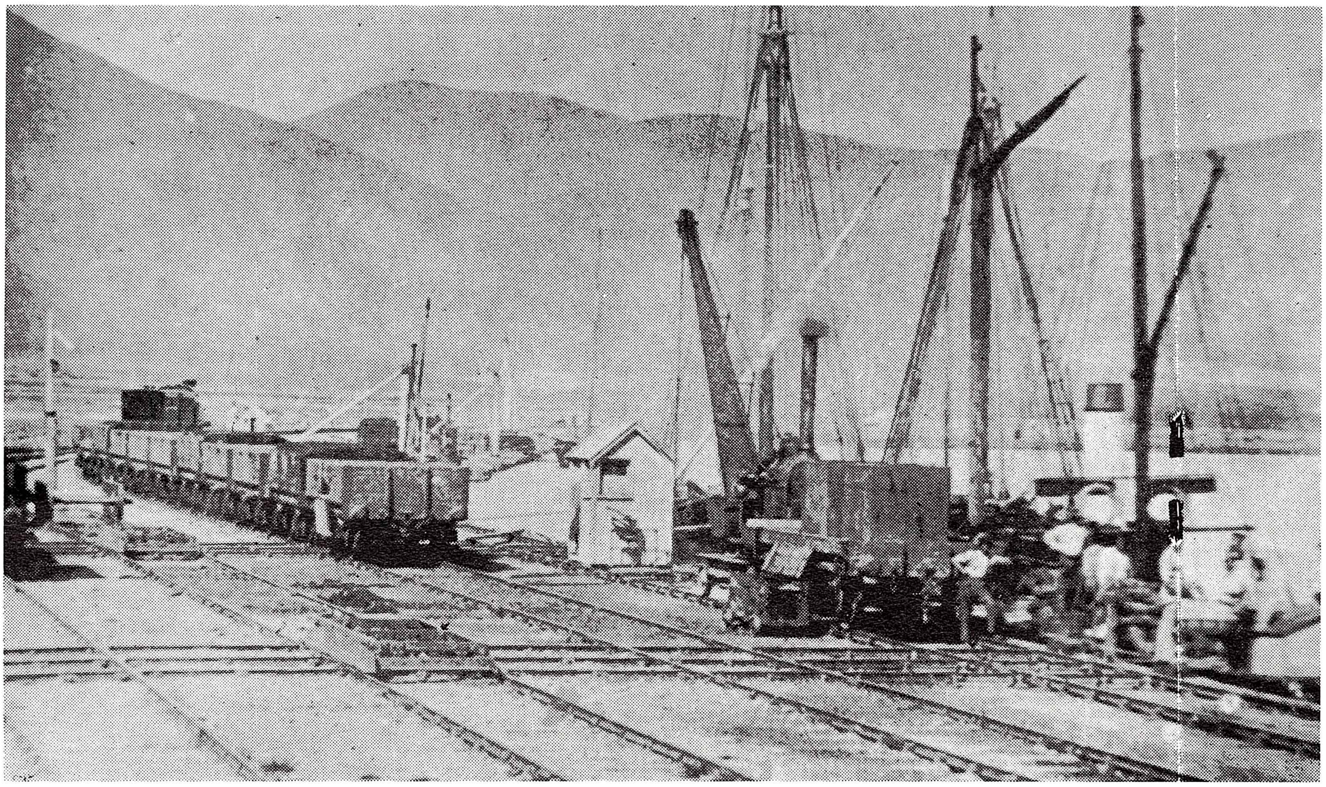
Ferrymead came back to life in the 1960s when work on the Ferrymead Historic Park began.[68] The piles of the old wharf are still visible and the old hotel building still stands, now a private home.



Ferrymead Railway Yards and shipping in the Heathcote about 1866. Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

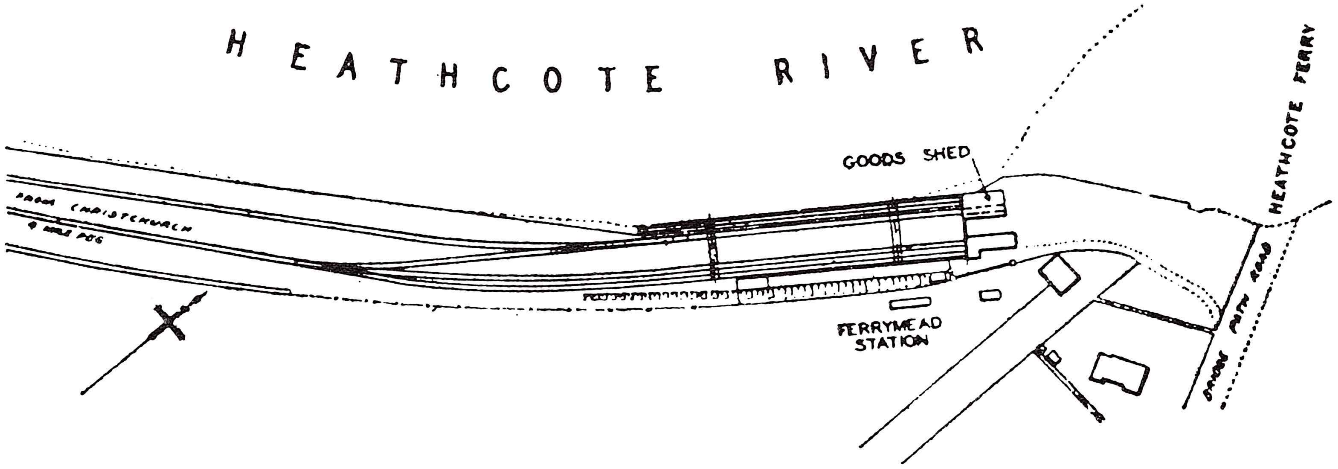


The remains of the Ferrymead Wharf. *Photograph: Canterbury Museum (undated).*



The Ferrymead railway yard and wharf, 1864. At the wharf is the steamer Wakool, *which was originally built for trade on the Murray River, Australia. She was used briefly in the Lyttelton - Heathcote trade carrying up to 100 tons of cargo per trip. Said to be unseaworthy, she was wrecked at Hokitika on March 1, 1865 on a trip to Westland.*

Photograph: Mundy and La Mert, courtesy Tramway Historical Society.



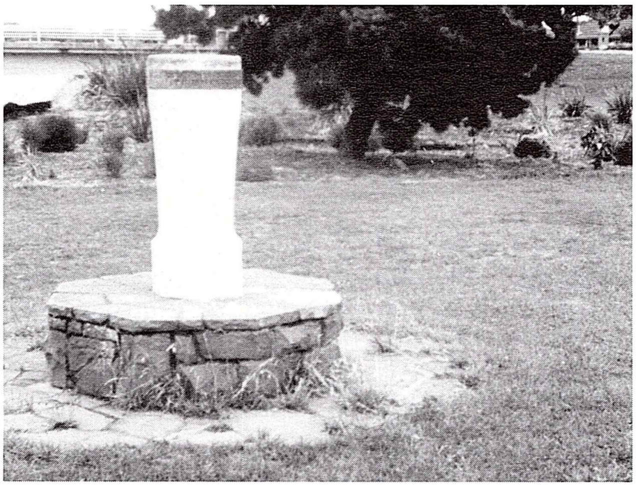
Layout of the Ferrymead railway yard, station and wharf.

courtesy New Zealand Railways Magazine

the Heathcote wharf (also known as the Steam wharf)

Near the junction of Ferry Road and the Tunnel Road stands a memorial stone bollard. This marks the approximate location of the Heathcote Wharf, the second wharf to be built on the Heathcote. Opened on March 1, 1852, this wharf became popularly known as the Steam Wharf because it was the upper limit of the river accessible to the steamers of the day.

Compared with Christchurch Quay, higher up the river, it added about a mile to the road journey to Christchurch. On the other hand, it cut three difficult miles off the river journey. Another advantage was that it was only half the length of the river journey up the Avon to the Bricks and it had direct road access to the centre of Christchurch.[69]



The memorial bollard which marks the location of the Steam Wharf in Ferry Road.
Photograph: Les Dew (1989).

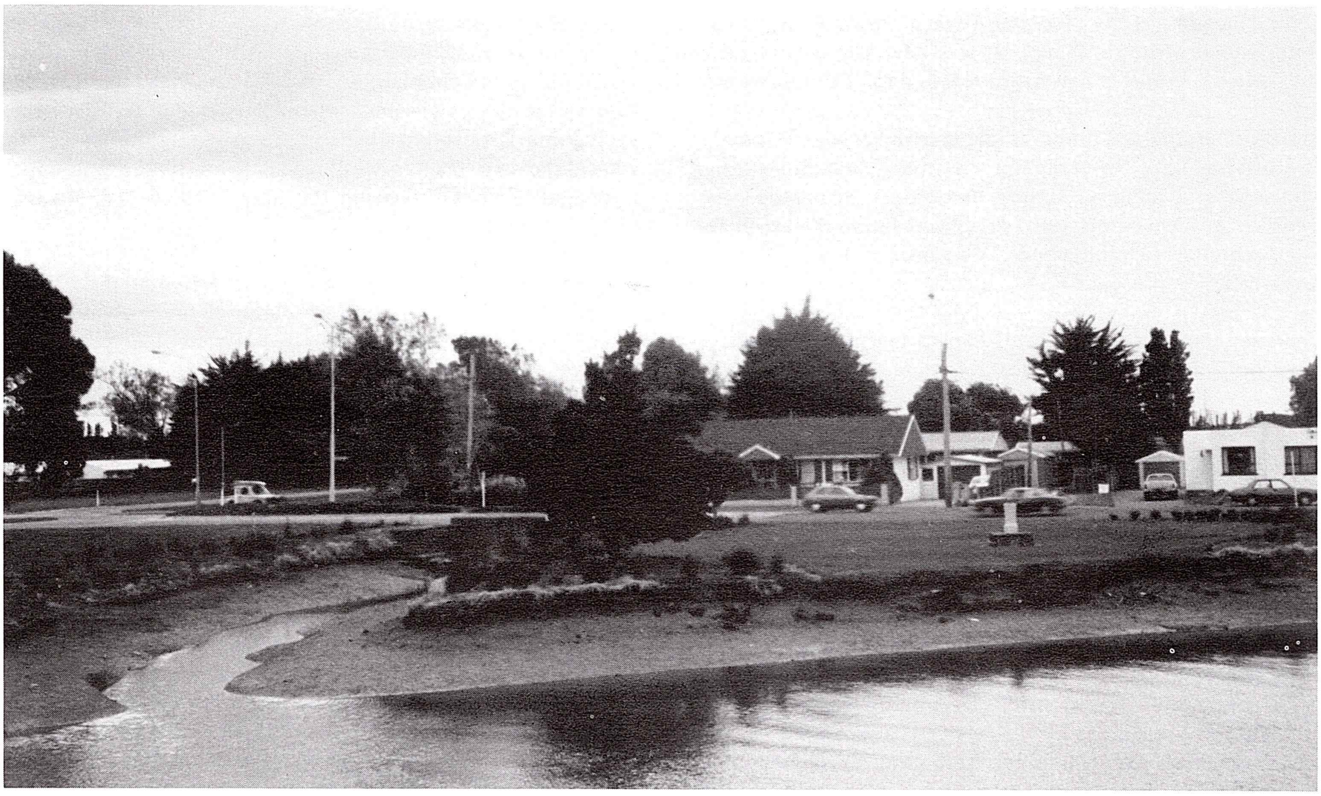
The wharfinger, George Fairfield, advertised that vessels using Heathcote Wharf could save a tide as compared with those continuing on to Christchurch Quay. In addition, sailing ships could avoid being towed as they did not have to negotiate the winding river above the wharf. Competitive cargo rates were set to encourage the shippers to use the wharf.

There was plenty of room around the wharf on which to develop the necessary facilities for a busy port. Good access was available for drays leaving or picking up cargo at the large two storey warehouse. A hand-winched crane was installed on the wharf to assist in cargo handling.

A tributary of the Heathcote, Dyers Creek, flowed into the Heathcote near this wharf. The confluence was used as a turning basin in which vessels could be pushed and turned, ready for the return trip down the river.[70] On October 25, 1862 the cutter *Midge* fouled the steamer *Gazelle* which was being slewed around in this manner.

Above the Steam Wharf the river narrowed and navigation was more difficult. On one occasion the *Mullogh* was taking a load of coal from Lyttelton to a flaxmill up the Heathcote. After discharging her load, the captain found it impossible to turn the vessel in the strong south-westerly conditions prevailing. It was necessary to steam the vessel very carefully, stern first, down to the Steam Wharf before it could be turned.

Use of the wharf started immediately. George Day in the *Flirt* and Captain Cain in the *Kaka* guaranteed to land goods free from all risks at £1 per ton.[71] Trade must have been somewhat fickle because, by August of that year, the cutter *Kaka* was bound for Nelson, "should sufficient inducement offer".[72]



View of the bollard at the Steam Wharf. Dyers Creek can be seen flowing into the Heathcote River at the left of the photograph. The confluence of the creek with the Heathcote formed a natural turning basin in which vessels could be turned.
Photograph: Les Dew (1989).

After the initial landing of the settlers' possessions the chief trade was building materials, mainly timber from Banks Peninsula. The 1870s were a building boom in Christchurch and large volumes of timber were carted up Ferry Road. The peak came in one week in 1874 when one million super-feet was unloaded along the Heathcote.[73]

Some of the mariners lived close to their vessels along the banks of the Heathcote. One, Captain Andersen, lived at the Steam Wharf. In his cutter *Deveron* he plied between Banks Peninsula and the Heathcote in the timber trade. After the demise of the river traffic he based his vessel at Lyttelton, where it was used to trade around the bays.

When the *Deveron's* days of trading were over, Bert Rhind presented her to the Navy. The Navy declined the offer, so, undeterred, Rhind presented her to the Canterbury Division of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve as a training vessel. As the offer was made public the Navy felt obliged to accept her and she was used for training until 1937, when she was condemned. It appears that the Navy may have known best after all.

Some ventures were short–lived. The schooner *Southern Queen* made only six trips in the timber trade, between the Peninsula and the Heathcote, before heading up to the Amuri Bluff for a load of limestone. This trip was her last, as she was wrecked on the bluff on August 26, 1880.

Another vessel to bring limestone to the Steam Wharf was the 22 ton ketch *Volunteer*. She also had a short life, being wrecked on Beacon Rock on July 13, 1866. There she lay in the sand until scouring by the tides in 1952 uncovered her ribs and keel.

Even after the opening of the railway tunnel the Steam Wharf continued in use. Twelve vessels made 30 calls at the wharf in the following two years.[74] One of these was the ketch *Lily*, under the command of Captain Adams. For many years she carried coal, cement and timber to the Steam Wharf and was reputed to be the last vessel to sail up the Heathcote before the waterway was blocked by the bridge, opened in 1907. After that date, her cargo was landed at Burns Jetty in the Estuary.

Thacker's wharf

At the point where Heathcote Street, Catherine Street and Maronan Street meet, is the site of Thacker's Wharf. J E Thacker was the owner of the largest timber mill on Banks Peninsula. Situated in Okains Bay, it was capable of producing 70,000 super-feet a week. Thacker had previously leased a site at the Bricks to establish a timber yard. His wharf on the Heathcote would have given him easier access to the markets of Christchurch.

In addition to the ill-fated *Alma*, Thacker employed three vessels to carry the timber between Okains Bay and his wharf on the Heathcote. These were the schooner *Elizabeth*, the 40 ton ketch *Alert* and the *Jeanette*.

Thacker had his share of hardships, losing the steamer *Alma* on the Sumner Bar in 1856 and the *Elizabeth* at Okains Bay on November 24, 1864.

Milton's wharf

Behind the present day Woolston Tavern (formerly the Wharf Hotel) stood Milton's Wharf. It was later known as Laurie and Milton's Wharf and was also referred to as Union Wharf.

Built for the coal and timber trade, it soon became the centre of a thriving industrial community. Timber yards, lime kilns, woolscours, a tannery, smithy and stores surrounded the wharf area. One of the store sheds was later taken over by Charles Smith as a fellmongery. A woolscour, much enlarged, survives to the present day.

Captain Louis Marquet, a well-known mariner of the day, lived along the banks of the Heathcote and made regular calls at this wharf in his 20 ton ketch *Margaret* with timber from the Peninsula. A friend with a strong draught horse helped to tow his ketch around Humbug Reach (also known as the Devil's Elbow) on many occasions when the weather or tide were against him. As soon as the vessel was safely tied up at the wharf, the two friends would walk over to the hotel for refreshments, not forgetting the horse, which was always rewarded with a bucket of beer.[75]

At peak times, up to 25 vessels could arrive at the Union Wharf in ten days. The inward cargo of timber was fairly steady, but outward cargo, which consisted chiefly of farm produce, fluctuated throughout the season.

Langdown's wharf

A short distance downstream from Thacker's Wharf, was Langdown's Wharf. It was built by William Langdown to land building materials, chiefly limestone to supply his two lime kilns which stood on a terrace above the wharf. In those days, lime was in high demand for use in the tanneries and was burnt to produce mortar for bricklaying. In 1863, during the construction of the tunnel, bricks were being made at the rate of 8,000 to 12,000 a day by Holmes and Company.[76] For the limestone trade, Langdown purchased the 30 ton schooner *Bee*. The *Bee* made weekly trips to the Amuri Bluff, near Kaikoura, which was the nearest accessible source of limestone, bringing back 40 tons per trip. The limestone was quarried high on the hills of the Amuri Bluff and carted down to the coast by bullock waggons. There were no harbours in the area and the vessels had to be loaded in open roadstead off the shore.

With no shelter from the sudden unpredictable storms which sweep up the coast, it is little wonder that many vessels were lost in this trade. The *Bee* was no exception. It was lost with all six crew members on July 18, 1881. Tragically, four of the crew were from the same family, Captain John Green and three of his sons. Other vessels wrecked at the Amuri Bluff while working in the limestone trade were the 45 ton *Triumph* (1868), the 15 ton schooner *Sea Bird* (1868) and the 19 ton *Southern Queen* (1880).[77]

Aikman's wharf

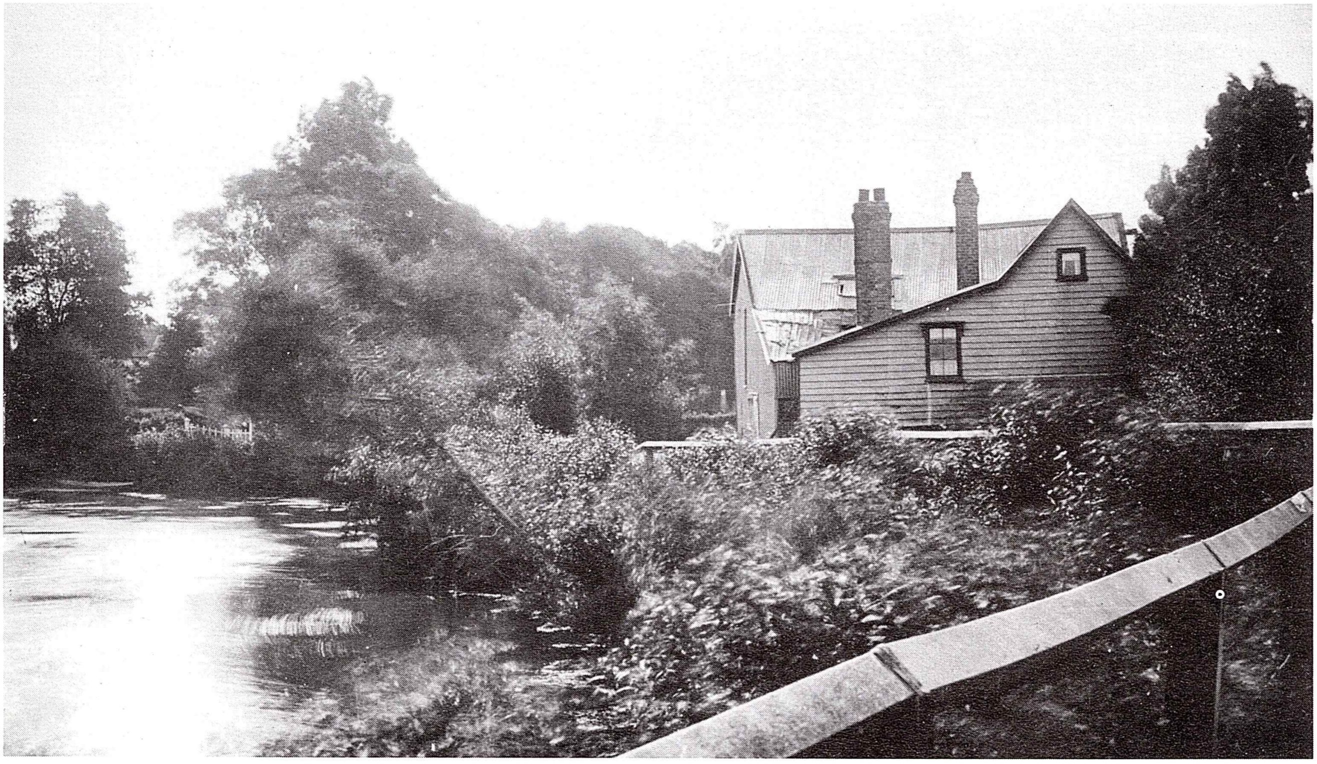
Built by the brothers, Sandy and Colin Aikman, this wharf was located just downstream from Christchurch Quay. Access was from the north-west end of Heathcote Street and from Navigation Street, which joined it to Ferry Road. The name Navigation Street was bestowed to mark the upper limit of the navigable part of the Heathcote River. The street was closed some years ago and now forms part of the present motel property downstream from Radley Bridge.

The wharf was built chiefly to serve a nearby woolscour, first owned by a man named Sheath, later by Thomas York. In fact, York eventually took over the running of the wharf.[78]

A bonded warehouse, the first to be built outside the port of Lyttelton, was built here in 1862. It was capable of storing 350 tons of grain. Customs officers had to travel from Christchurch to the warehouse when required on duty.

In December 1860, W Stroud, master of the fast-sailing schooner *Dauntless*, was advertising that he would take freight or consider a charter to any port in New Zealand, sailing from Aikman's Wharf.[79]

Christchurch Quay (also known as Montgomery's wharf)



Old Christchurch Quay at the corner of Ferry Road and Richardson Terrace. *Photograph: Canterbury Museum.*

Built in 1851, Christchurch Quay was the first wharf to be built on the Heathcote. It was situated at the junction of Ferry Road and Richardson Terrace, about two and a half miles from Cathedral Square, and at the practical limits for navigation along the river.

At first, trade to the wharf was steady. For instance, on one day alone – September 20, 1851 – six vessels unloaded at the Quay.[80]

It was expected that the surrounding land would be snapped up and that commercial development would soon outstrip the development at Market (later Victoria) Square. The "Lyttelton Times", in 1855, reported plans for the Christchurch Quay New Town, with land for stores and warehouses being set aside. The proposed development never eventuated, however.[81]

In 1851 a group of Christchurch merchants, including C W Bishop and George Gould, formed the Christchurch Conveyance Company, with the intention of delivering goods to Christchurch Quay at a reduced rate with a reliable service. At a shareholders' meeting in July 1852 they were able to claim they had achieved their objectives, by lowering the freight rate to £1 a ton and paying a 20% dividend.

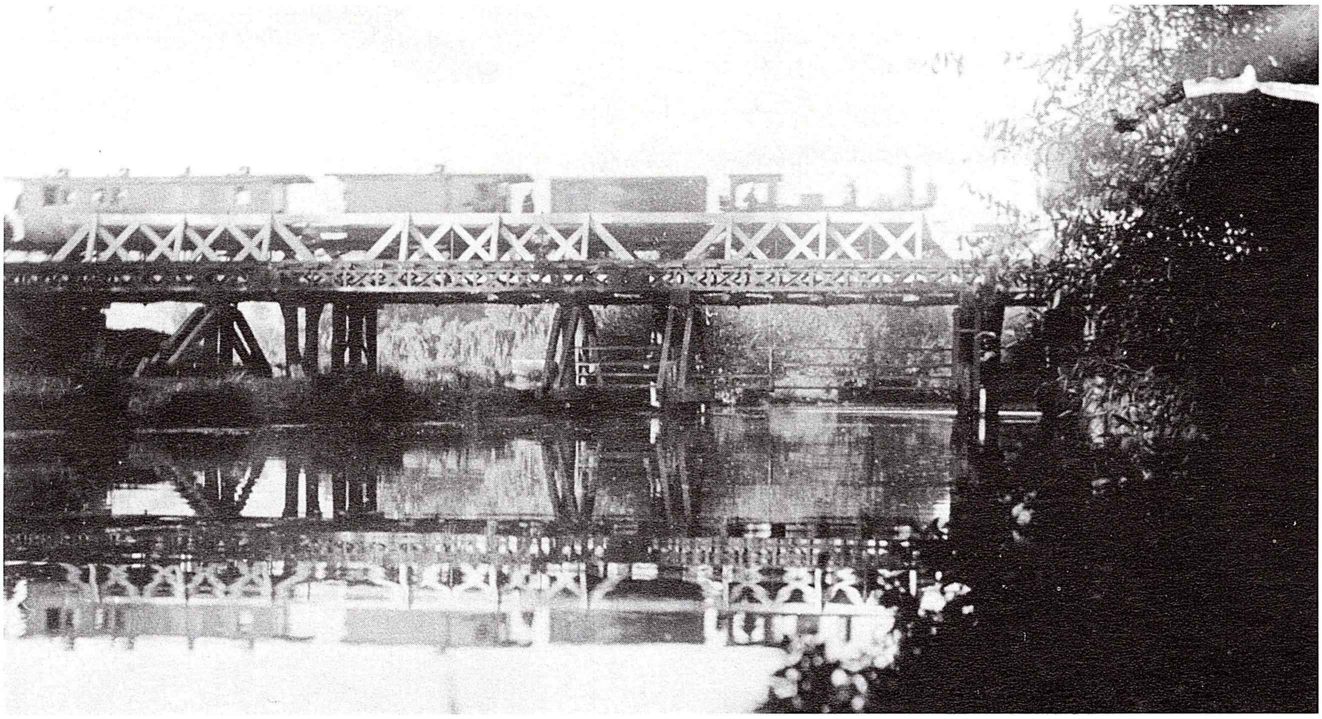
With vessels *Fanny* and *Fancy* the reliable service lasted only until the *Fanny* was wrecked on the Sumner Bar while carrying a much-needed cargo of flour. Although she was successfully floated off, the service to Christchurch Quay was reduced while the vessel was repaired. In fact, the service stopped from time to time when both vessels were undergoing repairs at the same time.

Even when the vessels were in service the fickle weather at the Bar often disrupted sailings. As a consequence the warehouses at Lyttelton were often filled to bursting point while the people of Christchurch, just over the hill, were suffering desperate shortages.[82] Dissatisfaction with the service, led to the formation of the four-boat syndicate [described in the section Transport on the Heathcote] which offered a more competitive rate for the combined Lyttelton-Christchurch journey.

Because of the tortuous nature of the river, many vessels had difficulty in sailing up as far as Christchurch Quay. Tow paths were provided on both banks of the river so horses could be used to tow vessels in difficulties. However, many captains preferred to use the wharves further downstream and, as a consequence, Christchurch Quay lost a great deal of trade and never became the centre it was expected to be.[83]

George Gould never lost his faith in the future of shipping in the Heathcote. Even as the Lyttelton railway tunnel was being drilled he commented that, "Boats will be coming up the river when the railway is scrapped".[84]

One name which became a household word in Christchurch was that of Joseph Martin Hayward. As a young man of 19 he ran a very lucrative business carting goods on his vessel between Lyttelton and his wharf in Ferry Road. When the river trade ceased, on completion of the railway tunnel in 1867, Hayward established his well-known carrying business which was to last for about 100 years.



The ultimate demise of river traffic on the Heathcote was brought about by the opening of the railway to Lyttelton. A train crossing the bridge over the Heathcote at Opawa, just upstream from Christchurch Quay, circa 1915.

Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

wharves in the Estuary

Several early families decided to settle around the Estuary. Farms were developed on the flat land and up the valley at Moncks Bay. One of the first primary industries of Christchurch was begun by the fishermen on the Redcliffs shore, who supplied most of Christchurch. Industrial development in Woolston, with a consequent pollution of the Heathcote and the Estuary, led to the early demise of the fishing industry.

These scattered communities had to rely on water transport to ship in all their essential supplies and over the years several wharves and jetties were built in the Estuary.

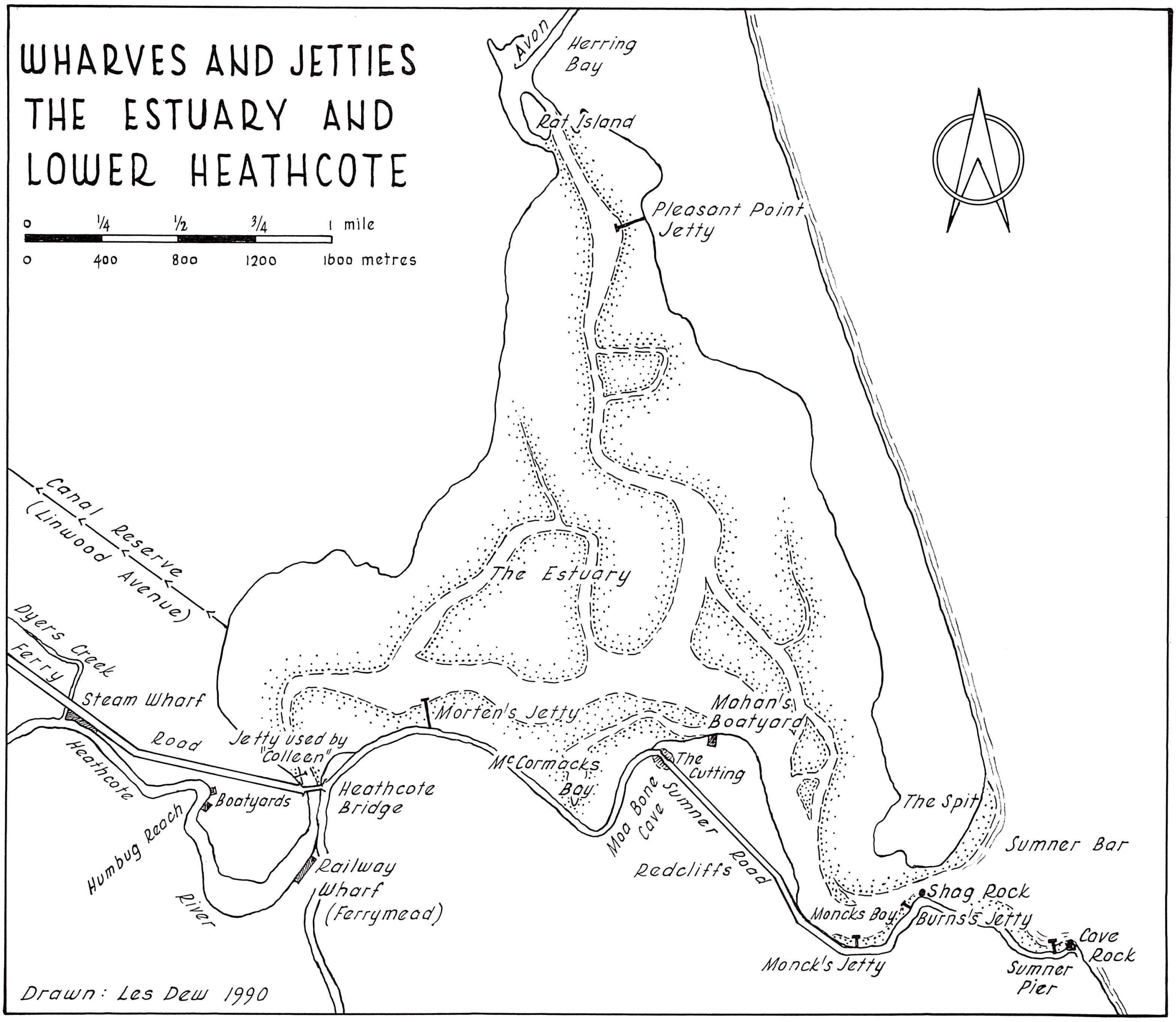
Burns's jetty

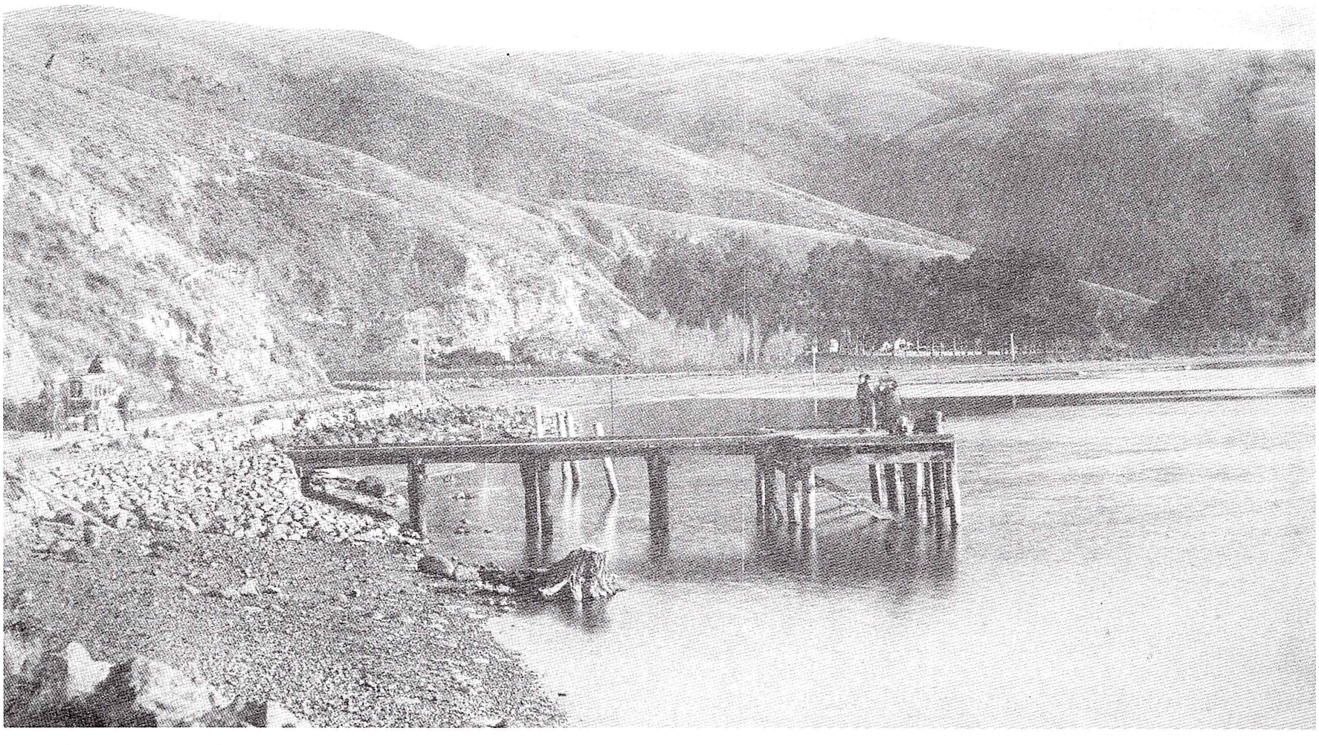
The area near Shag Rock was, from the early days, considered to be an ideal location for a wharf, provided that improvements could be made to the Bar. In the early 1850s this was the deepest part of the Estuary, with a depth of 28 feet.

Daniel Burns, a firewood merchant of Sumner, built a private jetty five chains from Shag Rock to land his supplies of coal and wood. A regular caller in this trade was Captain Ware's ketch *Catherine*.

Burns was constantly in dispute with many people who thought that the jetty was a public landing place and used it as such. The Lyttelton Harbour Board was called upon to arbitrate in the matter. It found that the jetty had been built without a permit and decided that the best way to settle the disputes was to assume control of the jetty. The Board rebuilt it and equipped it with a crane. The jetty survived until 1910, when it was demolished.

At low tide one could almost jump across from Shag Rock to the Spit at South Brighton. Over the years many proposals have been made to link these two places. Bridges have been suggested and rejected. At an early date there was a proposal to run a ferry across the mouth of the Estuary hauled by an engine and a winched rope. This idea was never developed and considering the fickle weather and the dangers of the Sumner Bar, it is perhaps just as well.





Burns' Jetty, near Shag Rock, in the 1880s.
A dray and a coach are just discernible on the far left. The jetty was built by Daniel Burns, a firewood merchant of Sumner, and was demolished in 1910. *Courtesy W de Thier.*

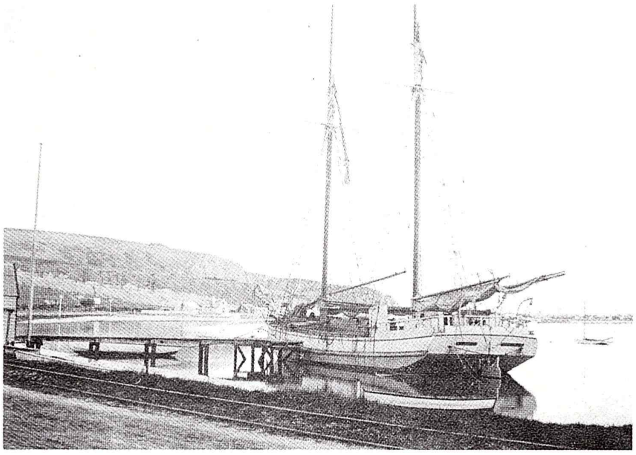
Monck's jetty

John Stanley Monck was one of the earlier farmers in the area, establishing his farm in the bay which bears his name. In the late 1860s he built a jetty. One of the first cargoes to be landed there was a consignment of 300 fence posts which George Day delivered in his ketch *Flirt* in 1869.[85] Within a short time Monck had purchased a boat for £11 to transport the produce of his farm, chiefly butter, to market.

Right: One of the last vessels to trade in the Estuary was the scow Comet. *She is seen here at Monck's Jetty in 1907, discharging a load of furniture for New Brighton.*
Courtesy W de Thier.

Monck maintained his jetty until the Lyttelton Harbour Board replaced it in 1891.

The new jetty was the venue for many of the early regattas, and the home of the Christchurch Sailing and Power Boat Club, now known as the Christchurch Yacht Club.



Morten's jetty

Built at the foot of Mount Pleasant Road in 1921, this "tee–shaped" jetty reached the channel of the Heathcote River, six chains from the shore. By the time the jetty was built, there was no commercial shipping in the Estuary. However, swimmers and the owners of yachts and pleasure craft made use of Morten's jetty. During the *Wahine* storm on April 11, 1968, it was damaged beyond repair and the remains were removed soon afterwards.

Left: Morten's jetty, a favourite spot for sportspersons and seagulls. *Courtesy W. de Thier.*

passenger services on the Estuary

the Colleen

Imagine travelling to Sumner by public transport in the 1880s. About one third of the journey was by water. Although the tramline to the Heathcote Bridge was opened in December 1882, it was November 1888 before the line reached Sumner and 1890 before the extension to Scarborough was opened.

When the tram reached the Ferrymead Bridge, the passengers transferred to one of Hayward's drags for the remainder of the journey to Sumner. In order to make the journey more comfortable, the directors of the Canterbury Tramway Company considered that a vessel, from the Heathcote Bridge to Sumner, with a call at Moncks Bay, might prove more acceptable to the travelling public.

Messrs Agar and Roberts' steam launch *Lyttelton* voyaged up the Estuary on December 14, 1882 and met the directors of the Tramway Company and some of their friends at the Swing Bridge. There the party embarked and, though it was dead low water, the little vessel conveyed them speedily and easily to Sumner. The return journey was equally pleasant.

The "Lyttelton Times" described the journey as follows:

"The trip was experimental and, we believe, with a view to providing a line to run in conjunction with the tramcars. A new route to Sumner avoiding the dust of the road, with the attendant dangers of the Cutting and the narrowness of the track would thus be opened up and we have no doubt the public will be delighted to hear, at an early date, that the launch has been laid on regularly".[86]

After a coach had overturned at the Cutting, killing one passenger, many people were reluctant to travel over this route by coach. It was thought that the proposed launch service would appeal to them.

A rather odd denial appeared in the correspondence column of the paper four days later. Agar and Roberts claimed that they had no intention of providing a service to Sumner. The voyage on December 14, was merely their desire to see if

Lyttelton could reach the bridge at low water and had nothing to do with a proposed service to Sumner. It seems strange that the directors of the Tramway Company just happened to be at the bridge at the same time.

In the event, the *Lyttelton* was not used for this purpose but the Tramway directors were convinced that a good service could be provided by a suitable vessel. Their choice was the *Colleen*.

Built in Dumbarton, Scotland, by William Denny and Brothers, *Colleen* was assembled at Dunedin in 1880 and spent her first three years working out of Dunedin for William Larnach. Larnach, a local merchant and Member of Parliament, is best remembered for his castle which still stands on the Otago Peninsula.[87]

The *Colleen*, a paddle-steamer measuring 79 feet by 15 feet 6 inches, was powered by a single, 18 horse-power engine. She was purchased in 1883 by a Christchurch company, the registered owner being Robert Dyason, a mariner of Christchurch. The fact that some of the shareholders in the Colleen Company were directors of the Canterbury Tramway Company was not lost on Tramway Company shareholders at many stormy meetings over the following years. Many of the shareholders believed that the Tramway Company had been pushed into the *Colleen* deal, against its better judgement, but the directors denied that there was any conflict of interest on their part.

The *Colleen* made a trial trip on Wednesday, November 21, 1883. The Chairman and directors of the Canterbury Tramway Company, the Chairman and some members of the Lyttelton Harbour Board and their friends arrived at Heathcote by special tram at 12.10pm. There they found a tidy craft, with all her space, except the engine-room devoted, to her passengers. Her two cabins, with cushioned seats, were capable of accommodating 214 passengers with ample protection from the weather.

The forty-minute voyage to Sumner was satisfactory. The vessel had no great speed, but then speed was not possible in the meandering channels in the Estuary. It was considered that engine power could be increased in the future, if necessary.

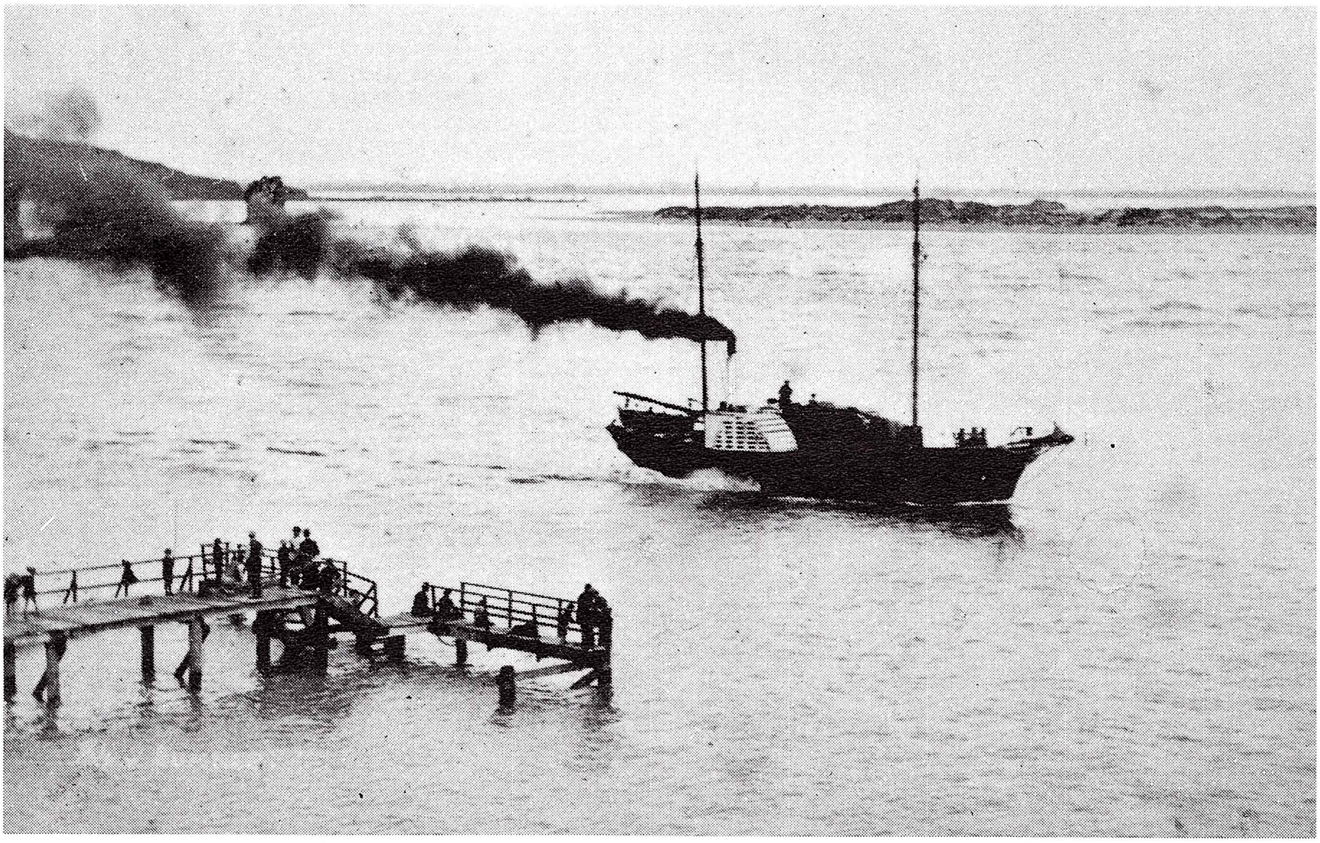
It was not possible to come alongside the jetty at Sumner due to the state of the tide. Harbour Board officials agreed to lengthen the jetty by a few spans to make it available at all stages of the tide. These officials also made a note of any other improvements necessary to accommodate the service.

Some passengers jumped ashore at Sumner on to the beach. After refreshments and speeches, the party returned to Christchurch, some by coach and tram whilst others preferred a return voyage in the *Colleen*.

All agreed that such a service must appeal to the Sumner passengers, who would enjoy the fresh sea air after working all day in stuffy factories and offices.[88]

The service did not go as planned. It had been expected that the steamer would have paid her expenses and increased patronage on the Ferry Road tram line. Unfortunately, the season was bad. Silting of the channels had led to the *Colleen* being stuck at some of the bends. At a meeting of the Canterbury Tramway Company in February 1884 it was reported that the *Colleen* had been laid up at Heathcote and was being offered for sale. As the service had not proved satisfactory, it was thought best to dispose of the vessel.

Shareholders became angry when they found out that the Tramway Company held a mortgage of £500 over the vessel. They questioned the connection between the directors of the



The paddle-steamer Colleen *off Sumner Pier.*

Courtesy W de Thier.

Tramway Company, who were also shareholders in the *Colleen*. The directors assured them that they had nothing to worry about. The *Colleen* cost £3,000 when new, and was still worth about £1,800. The trouble, as it turned out, was that nobody seemed willing to buy her and she was to prove an embarrassmment for the next few years.[89]

The Tramway Company was still convinced that the connecting service between Heathcote and Sumner should be run by a steamer. The steam launch *Diamond*, which had proved unsuccessful on the Avon, was given a trial in March 1884. Due to the success of that trial, *Diamond* was used on the service in the hope that she would rapidly win public favour.[90] *Diamond* connected with the Ferry Road tram at the Heathcote Bridge.

DIAMOND'S TIMETABLE
Return fare: 1 shilling.

DEPART BRIDGE	ARRIVE SUMNER	DEPART SUMNER	ARRIVE BRIDGE
Monday to Saturday			
11.00am	11.30am	12.55pm	1.40pm
1.45pm	2.20pm	3.55pm	4.40pm
Sunday			
11.40am	12.15pm	12.30pm	1.15pm
2.40pm	3.15pm	4.15pm	5.00pm

This timetable was in contrast to the coach service which ran seven services between Sumner and the bridge connecting with the tram. The fare, in this case, was 1/– for the combined coach and tram ride, each way. Once the tram rails reached Sumner, both these modes of transport were dispensed with.

The *Colleen*, like the Ancient Mariner's albatross, was still haunting the Canterbury Tramway Company. At both the seventh annual meeting of the Tramway Company in February 1885, and the half-yearly general meeting in July 1885, the directors had the difficult task of advising angry shareholders that the vessel had still not been sold. The shareholders criticised the directors for getting involved in the *Colleen* in the first place, especially when traffic returns were down. Again, the fact that the directors of the Tramway Company were shareholders in the *Colleen* was hotly debated. The directors continued to maintain that the two comnpanies were entirely separate and one did not influence the other. Shareholders, who stood to lose money on the deal held a different view on the matter.[91]

At last, at the half-yearly general meeting of the Tramway Company in February 1887, the directors were able to advise the shareholders that the *Colleen* had been sold to James Brown, an engineer of Wellington. The bad news was that the Tramway Company had lost heavily on the deal. As well as the mortgage of £500, incidental expenses had added a further £300 to the Company's liability. The total purchase price received for the vessel was only £450. It was reported that the owners of the vessel had lost £1,500 on the deal.[92]

The *Colleen* was last heard of as a coal hulk at Pipiriki, on the Wanganui River. She was eventually broken up because of decay and the register for this controversial vessel was closed in 1914.[93]

boatbuilding

With so much shipping activity in the area it is little wonder that boat builders established yards in the Heathcote and the Estuary.

In his yard at Heathcote, Robert Owen built the *Maid of the Avon*, a 12 ton paddle–steamer. She was built of local wood and her engines were built by John Anderson. There were two yards at Humbug Reach. In one, J Dixon built the 20 ton ketch, *Quiver*. The other yard was run by the Jackson brothers, who built a 36 ton schooner in 1876.

During the 1930s and 40s, travellers on the Sumner trams took a keen interest in the building of a large yacht on a slip in Redcliffs, near *T.S.S. Cornwall*. For years it seemed that this boat would never be finished, but she was eventually launched after the Second World War and named the *Cutty Sark*.

One of the later boat building establishments on the Estuary was Mahan's yard near Moa Bone Point in Beachville Road. After building many pleasure craft in the 1950s, the business was shifted to Christchurch.

control of the Estuary

Control of the Estuary has changed hands on several occasions. Following the abolition of the provinces and the establishment of the Lyttelton Harbour Board in 1876, control of the Estuary and the Avon and Heathcote Rivers was vested in the Board. The river limits under the control of the Harbour Board were re-defined on September 21, 1888. On the Heathcote the Board's jurisdiction stopped at the Steam Wharf, and on the Avon, at a point six chains above the Brighton tramway bridge.

An Order-in-Council dated July 16, 1954, re-defined the limits of the Lyttelton Harbour Board, excluding the Estuary and the rivers. The control over these passed to the Marine Department.

In February 1964 the Christchurch City Council sought control of the Estuary under Section 8a of the Harbours Act 1950. The Marine Department agreed, subject to the City Council drawing up acceptable by-laws. This done, control of the Estuary was vested in the City Council on September 26, 1968, with all the powers and functions of a harbour board. The Resource Management Bill, currently before Parliament (1990) proposes to transfer this power to the Canterbury Regional Council.

Many proposals have been put forward for the future use of the Estuary. Of the more interesting, was a proposal to establish a solar salt works, similar to the one operating at Lake Grassmere in Marlborough. Another proposal, during the Second World War, was to establish a flying boat base.

Today, people accept the Estuary for what it is, a tidal wildlife sanctuary. It is, therefore, unlikely that any significant changes will be made to the Estuary in the future. The Estuary is now used extensively for water sports: yachting, power boating, sailboard riding, and wet bike riding.

crossing the Heathcote

the Heathcote ferry

When the first settlers arrived at Lyttelton in December 1850, they found an unfinished road over the hills to Sumner. In Volume 1 we have seen that this ambitious scheme was delayed by lack of funds and was not completed until 1857. Early in 1851 the Bridle Path was built over the Port Hills and was usable for foot traffic or packhorses with light loads. When those who had walked across the Bridle Path reached the plains, they were immediately confronted with another obstacle, the Heathcote River and its marshy banks. Only six months after the arrival of the first settlers, a ferry was established at a place where the Bridle Path met Ferry Road and would eventually be joined by the Sumner Road, known to this day as Ferrymead (the meadow beside the ferry).

The first ferry was a rowing boat operated by Thomas Hughes, conveying people across for 6d. per head. In May 1851, a 24 feet x 10 feet punt was launched to cater for livestock. Ramps were provided at each end to assist in loading at the swampy banks of the river.

The punt was hauled across the river by the ferryman using a heavy rope, which was dropped to the bed of the river when vessels were passing along the river.[94]

For 1/– a year, Hughes rented a strip of land across the river and a quarter–acre section on which he erected his house.[95] The Canterbury Association was pleased to leave the ferry and its operation in private hands. However, the Association did pay towards repairs to the ferry. These were included as part of the expenditure on the construction of Ferry Road, which was little more than a row of surveyor's posts to guide people through the swamps and the high scrub.

Hughes, however, was responsible for the formation and repair of the approaches across the swampy river banks.

An early pioneer, Dr A C Barker, has left a fairly vivid account of travel in those early days.[96] Whilst he was building his house in the middle of Christchurch (on the site of the present Noahs Hotel) he left his wife and children at Day's Accommodation House at Sumner. On his frequent visits to his family he twice became lost while walking to the ferry. On one occasion he arrived at the river bank, where the ferry had been established only the day before, to find that the boat was away and was not expected back until 10.00pm that night. Anxious to see his family, he cut flax stalks and ti palms which he tied together with handkerchiefs, to make a raft to support him while he swam across. Unfortunately, the raft was swept away in the swift current and only with difficulty was the good doctor able to struggle to the bank – the one he had just left. Wet through, he decided that it would be more prudent to await the ferry.

In December 1851, James Townsend leased 150 acres at the ferry site from John Robert Godley. Townsend was required to provide a suitable approach on each side of the river and to observe a fixed scale of charges. These were: horses 6d., cattle 3d., foot passengers 3d., packhorses, carts and bullocks 9d., sheep 1d. or 1 $^1/_2$d., depending on the number. Rates were doubled during the hours of darkness, but by way of concession, only one fare was paid for horses and drays returning on the same day. This was about half the fares charged by Hughes.[97]

In April 1852 the ferry was moved several chains upstream to the site of the future Ferrymead station and wharf. At this position the punt was in a more sheltered location, the grades on the approach roads were reduced and the approaches were metalled to provide easier access. This was to be the permanent home for the ferry until it was superseded by the first bridge over the Heathcote at Ferrymead. In fact, the shifting of the ferry upstream cleared the ground for the eventual construction of that bridge.

The rates charged on the ferry were not popular with the early travellers. However, the only way to escape these charges meant a long detour around the foot of the hills. Several farmers preferred this method of saving money when carrying their goods to market. Upstream the river had to be forded and these farmers rolled up their butter in their clothes and carried the whole lot over their heads while making the river crossing. The eventual construction of Wilson's Bridge at St. Martins made this uncomfortable expedient no longer necessary.

For a time, Brown and LeCren ran the ferry but it was eventually taken over in December 1856 by William Dale, who also ran a spring cart from the foot of the Bridle Path to the ferry. In the following year, Dale erected a Ferry House on the river bank to house two employees who were paid 25/- a week plus their keep. Dale's house and a new punt were paid for by a grant of £2,100 by the Provincial Government.

Day's Accommodation House, Sumner. It was situated in Clifton Bay, not far from Cave Rock.

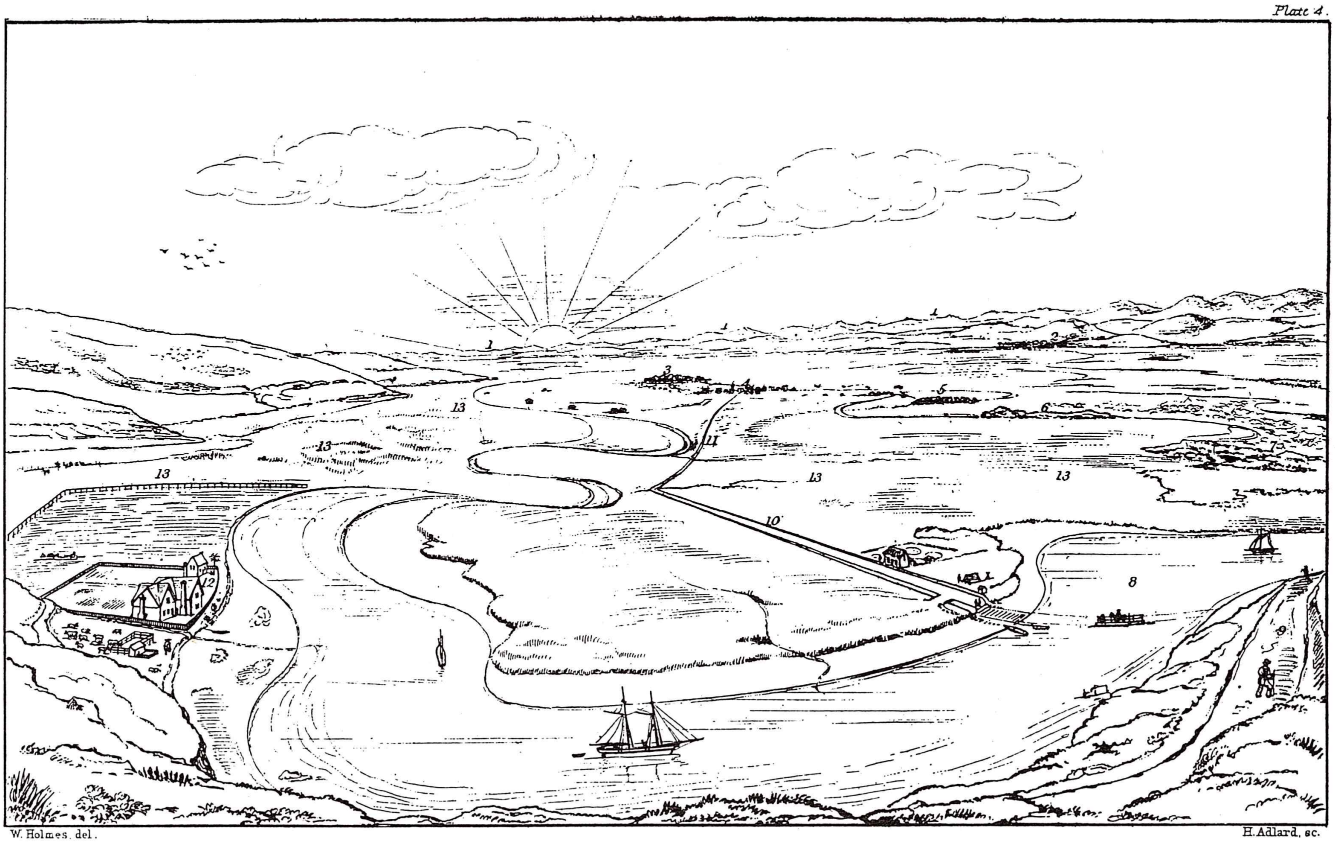


Plate 4.
W. Holmes. del.
H. Adlard, sc.

The Heathcote River, with the ferry in the foreground, and Ferry Road leading to Christchurch and Riccarton Bush in the background. *Sketch by W Homes.*

1 Southern Alps
2 Harewood Forest and Oxford (timber and coal)
3 Riccarton Bush
4 Christchurch
5 Papanui Bush
6 & 7 Sand hills with wild pigs
8 Heathcote River
9 Bridle Path
10 New road to Christchurch
11 Christchurch Quay
12 Greenlands. Townsend
13 Swamps

Courtesy Christchurch Press.

The large increase in both persons and goods being handled required improved facilities and the money was also spent in providing buildings to house the passengers and goods waiting for the ferry.

In a survey taken in November 1862, it was found that, during one week, 816 passengers, 312 saddle horses, 295 passenger conveyances and 268 carts used the ferry. If these figures are used to obtain an annual figure it is obvious that the ferry was well patronised.[98]

Using the ferry was not without its risks, however. It is recorded that in 1863 a family boarded the punt in a horse-drawn spring-cart. The horse kept on walking, dragging the cart containing the luckless family into the water at the other end of the punt. Fortunately, the family was rescued, cold but unharmed. It is reported that the horse drowned.[99]

With all this activity in the district it is not surprising that an hotel was built at the ferry. During his time as ferryman, Hughes was also proprietor of the hotel and he eventually left the ferry to concentrate on the hotel. Following Major Hornbrook's Mitre, this was Canterbury's second hotel.

The ferry service closed when the Heathcote Swing Bridge opened on April 18, 1864.

the Heathcote Bridge

Although the ferry served a useful purpose it could only be considered a stopgap and could not be expected to handle the ever-increasing traffic crossing the Heathcote at Ferrymead.[100]

Late in 1862 the Provincial Council gave its Superintendent the power to build a bridge as part of the Sumner Road project. Construction was delayed by the late arrival of materials from England. Built by Holmes and Richardson at a cost of £6,036, it was officially opened in April 1864 by Mr Montgomery, Chairman of the Heathcote Road Board.

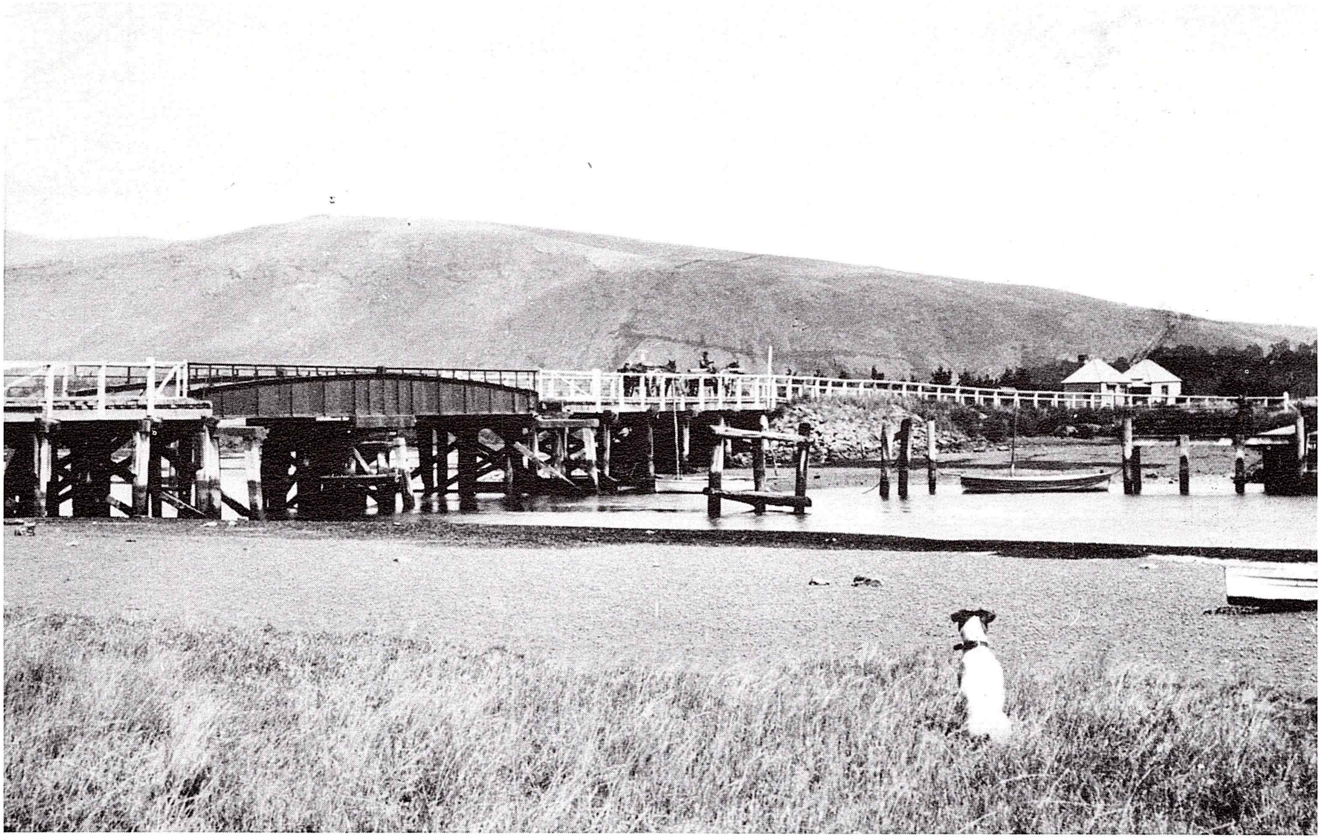
As the railway to Ferrymead had opened in December 1863, there was considerable movement of vessels in the lower reaches of the Heathcote, to the Railway Wharf at Ferrymead and the various wharves built upstream. The first bridge over the Heathcote, therefore, had to be designed to allow the passage of ships. Both ends of the bridge were built of timber. The central portion was made of iron in the foundry of R Stephenson at Newcastle-on-Tyne. The bridge was known as the Heathcote Swing Bridge because the central iron section of 76 feet was mounted on piles driven into the centre of the river.

By means of a large cog wheel on which the bridge sat, and a rack-and-pinion worked by a winch, one man could swing the central section at right angles to its axis, allowing a clear passage of 32 feet on either side for the navigation of vessels. To assist the passage of vessels, sets of Dolphin piles were driven above and below the bridge to guide vessels into the openings. The operator lived in a cottage on the river bank nearest to Woolston. As a safety measure for those crossing the bridge at night, lamps were placed above the centre of the bridge showing a clear white light when the bridge was available for road traffic and a red danger light when it was swung open for the passage of a ship.

The bridge was expected to pay for itself and a series of tolls were introduced. These were about half of the fees charged by the ferry which the bridge had superseded. Tariffs were as follows: horses 3d., horned cattle 2d., vehicles drawn by one horse 6d., with 3d. per additional horse, sheep $^1/_2$d. each, up to 100, then $^1/_4$d. each., and foot passengers were permitted to cross without charge.[101]

Many folk bitterly resented the tolls, saying that it was their understanding that, in voting money to build the bridge, the Provincial Council had promised a free bridge.

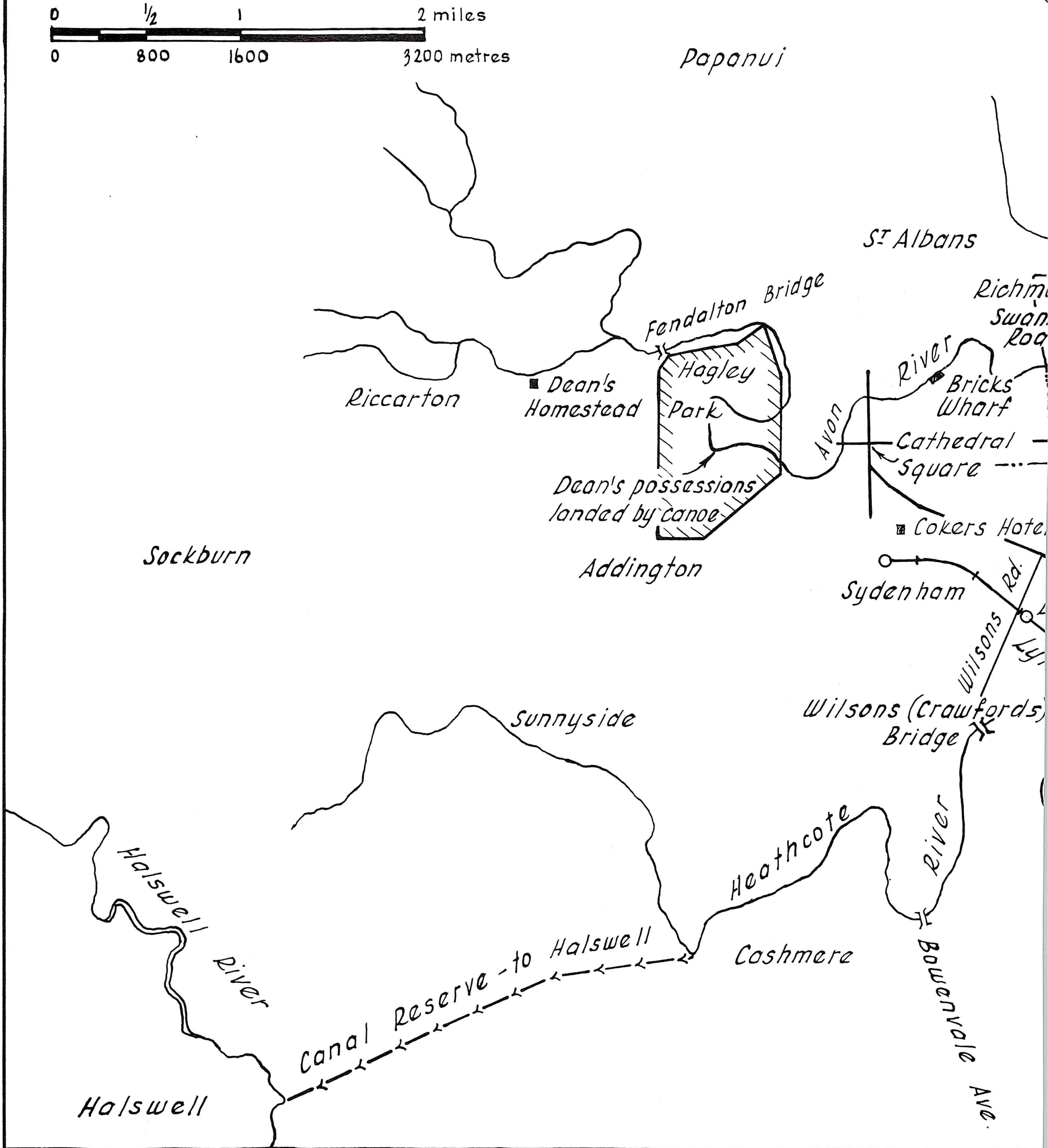
The control of the bridge passed to the Heathcote Road Board later in 1864. For a time the tolls more than paid for the expenditure on the maintenance on the bridge but, with the opening of the railway tunnel to Lyttelton, much of the goods traffic was taken away from the bridge and the amount taken in tolls dropped dramatically. With the advent of the tunnel the use of the Heathcote for shipping declined and the bridge was opened less frequently. The impending change from steam to electric trams in the early 20th century and the

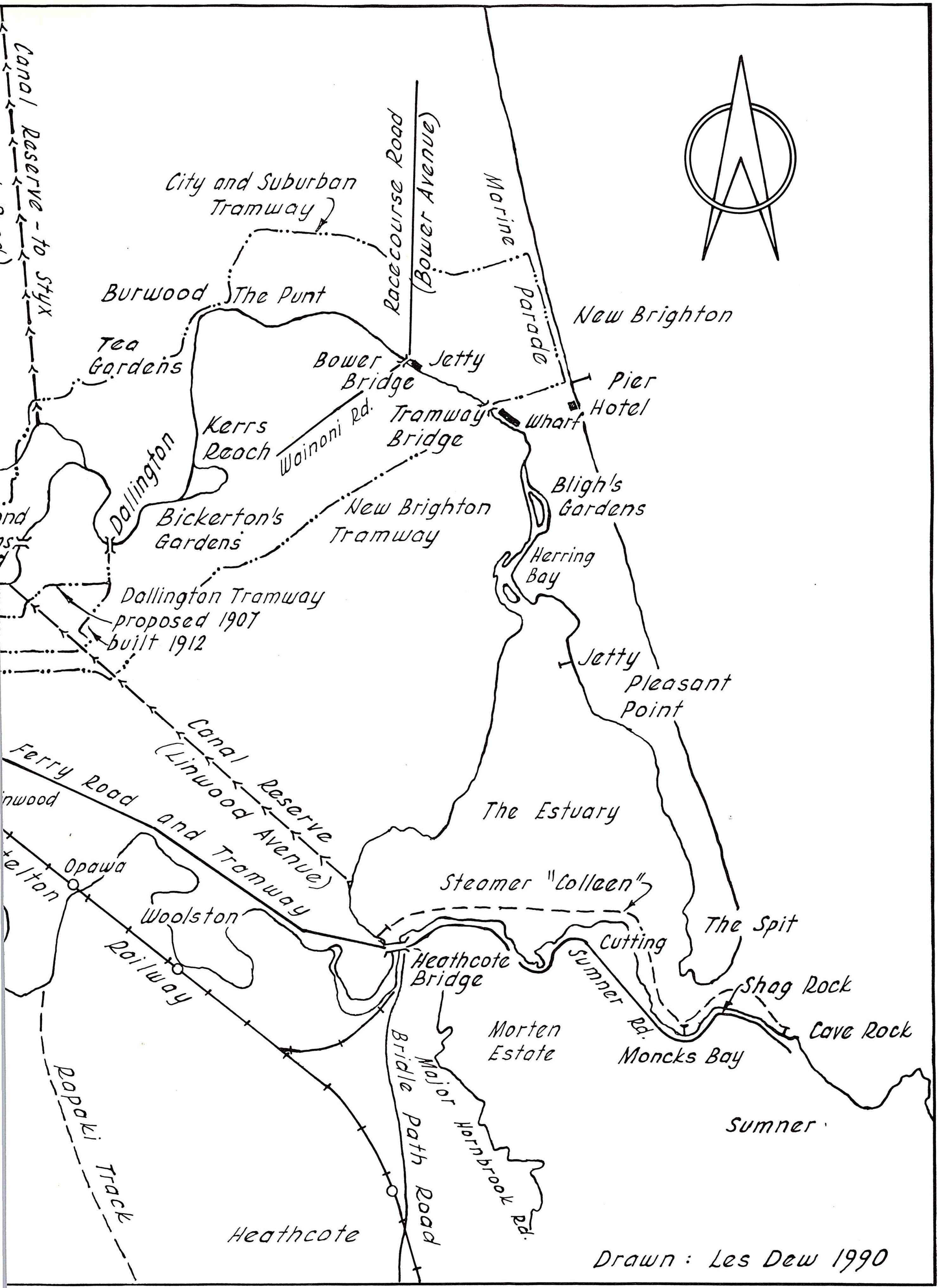


The original Heathcote Swing Bridge.
The swinging centre span was later used to bridge both the Avon and Heathcote Rivers.
Photograph: W A Taylor Collection, Canterbury Museum.

THE WATERWAYS OF EARLY CHRISTCHURCH

with some important connecting services



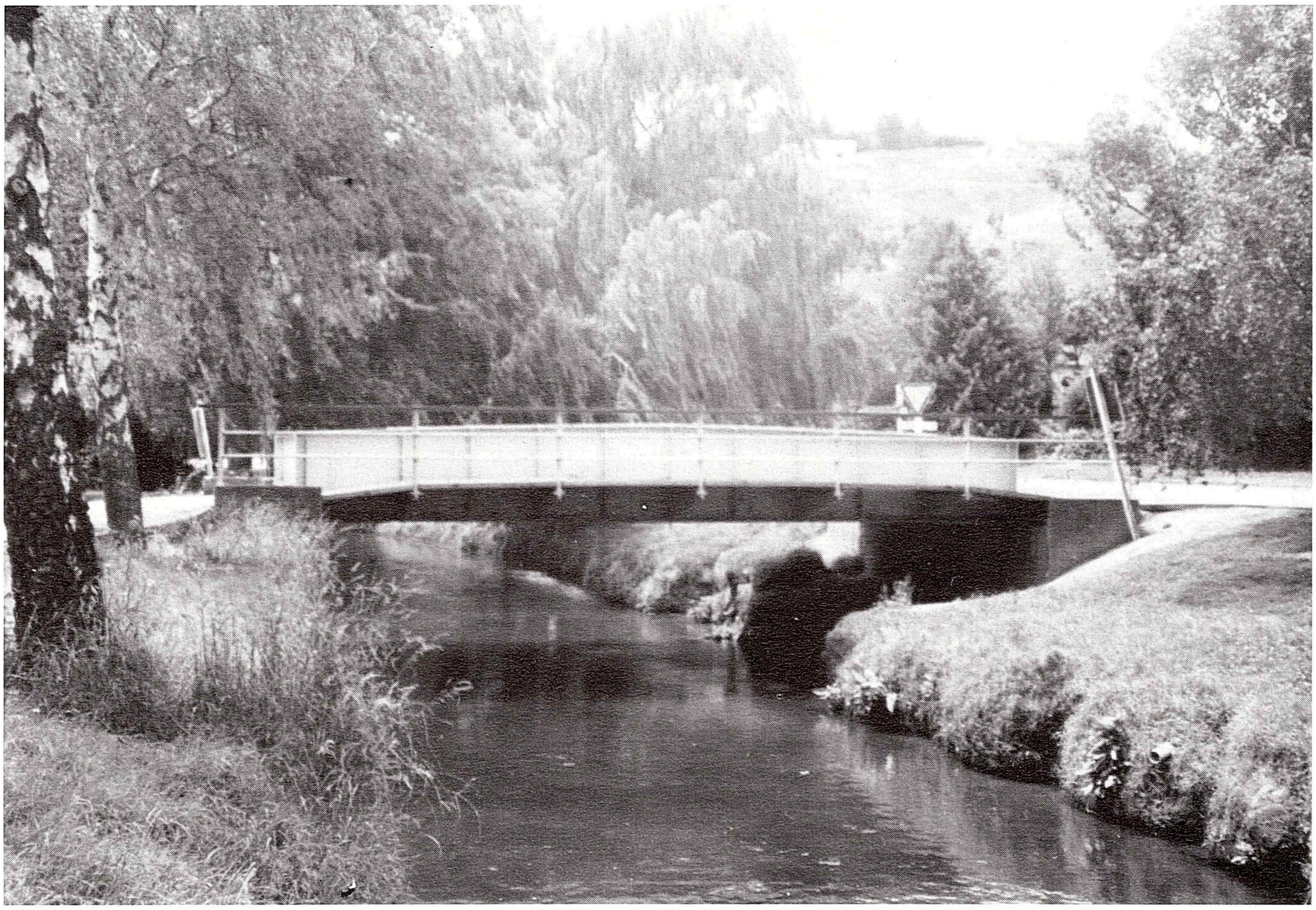


Drawn : Les Dew 1990

increased traffic using the bridge showed that the old swing bridge was in urgent need of replacement after forty-four years of faithful service.

With the opening of the new bridge on March 9, 1907, the original swing bridge was closed to traffic. However, recycling, that fad of the 1980s, is no new innovation. With the demolition of the swing bridge, the central iron section and the turning mechanism were sold to Mr S P Andrews for £5. They lay alongside the new bridge until purchased by the Heathcote County Council in 1909 for re-erection as a bridge over the Avon at Swanns Road. With the subsequent replacement of the Swanns Road Bridge with a modern structure, the iron section was shifted to the bottom of Bowenvale Avenue, where it once again bridges its own river, the Heathcote.

The single-lane bridge still spans the Heathcote and was strengthened in the mid-1980s to take the heavier, more modern buses of the Christchurch Transport Board. In all, this span has served the citizens of Christchurch for 123 years. It seems that when our pioneering ancestors made a purchase, they received value for money.



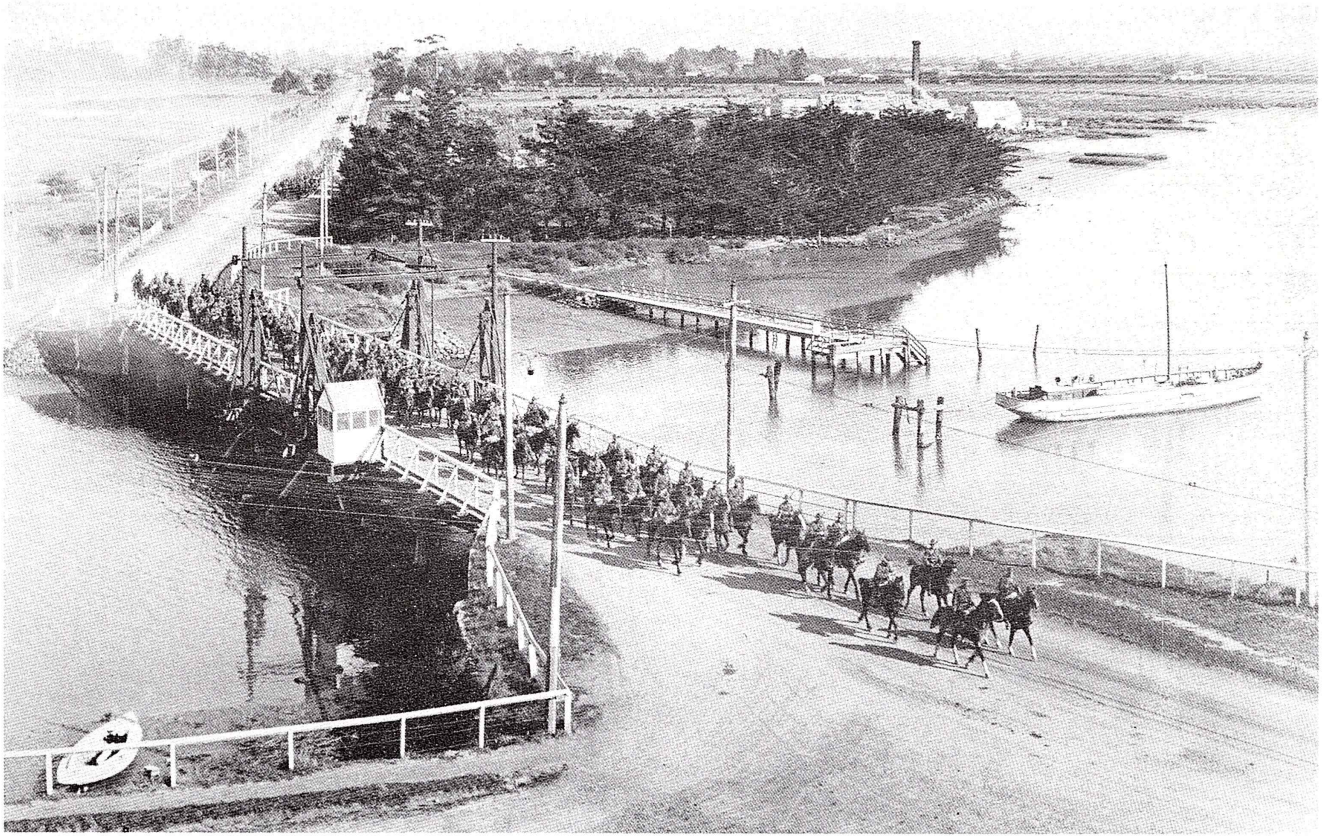
Back on its own river. The centre span of the original Heathcote Swing Bridge spans the Heathcote River once more, this time at the foot of Bowenvale Valley. For many years it spanned the Avon at Swanns Road.

Photograph: Les Dew (1990).

the second Heathcote bridge

Opened on March 9, 1907, the second bridge was sited just upstream from the old swing bridge. It was opened in time for the extension of the electric tramway to Sumner in April 1907. The bridge was wider, taking two lanes of traffic at a pinch. It was quite adequate in the days before the high density of motor traffic. Although the railway to Lyttelton was well established before the bridge was designed, there were those who thought that there would be a revival of the shipping trade through the Estuary. As a consequence the bridge was designed with an opening section in the middle to give a passage 30 feet wide for shipping. The bridge was designed by James Crawford, the engineer of the Sumner Borough Council and the lifting gear was designed by F H Chamberlain, the first engineer of the Tramway Board.[102] A double drawbridge system was adopted, with seven and a half horse-power motors to do the lifting. Because of the many local authority boundaries meeting at this point, the total cost of £3,180 was shared between these bodies. The Government made a grant of £500. Of the remainder, the Woolston Borough, Sumner Borough and Heathcote Road Board each contributed 20 per cent. The Tramway Board paid 25 per cent and the Christchurch City Council paid 15 per cent.

Unfortunately, the lifting gear on the bridge never worked. On opening day, after all the speeches, the power was turned on and, with much creaking, the drawbridge opened. However it would not close properly and the repairs necessary to re-align the decking disrupted the tram service to Sumner for over three weeks. In actual fact, the Estuary trade never did revive and there was no call to re-open the bridge, apart from an attempt during the delivery of the Davis Gelatine boiler.



The second Heathcote Bridge. The control cabin is seen attached to the side of the bridge. Captain George Andrews' vessel, Cascade, *leaving the jetty which was used by the* Colleen. *Mounted soldiers are crossing on the way to a camp at Redcliffs during the First World War.*

Courtesy W de Thier.

the saga of the Davis Gelatine boiler

Situated on the banks of the Heathcote River near Rutherford Street (formerly Princes Street) is the old established Woolston factory of Davis Gelatine–producing glue, gelatine products, adhesives and size.

In 1933 the firm purchased a 47 ton boiler from Sydney and this was shipped to Lyttelton. It was too large to transport through the railway tunnel and too bulky to bring over Evans Pass. The only alternative was to transport it across the Sumner Bar by ship and up the Heathcote River to the factory. The Company wrote to the City Council making a formal request to have the Heathcote Bridge opened for the passage of the ship. This request caused quite a panic in the Council.

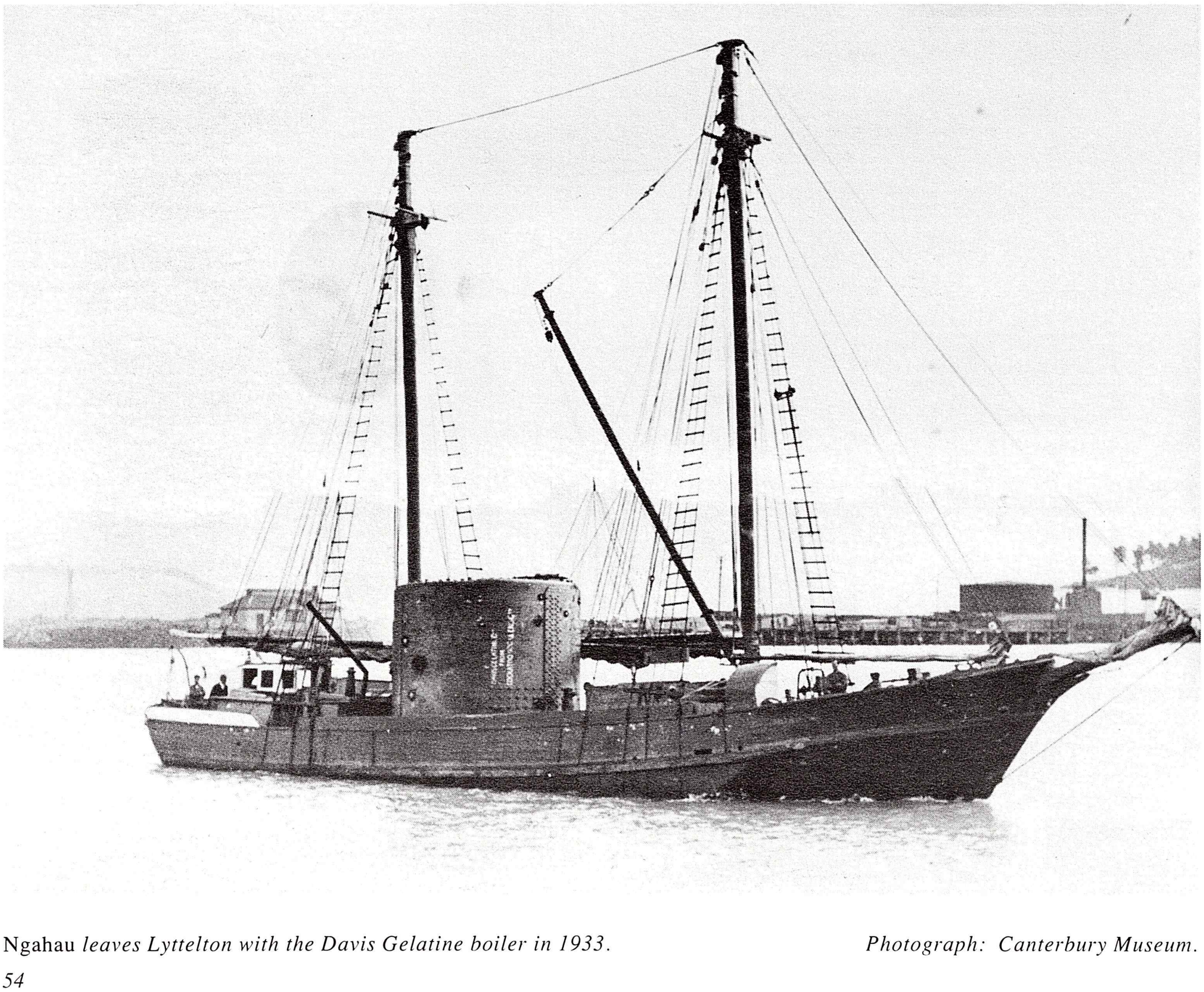
The Christchurch City Council had inherited the bridge as a result of an amalgamation with the Woolston Borough on

November 1, 1921. The bridge was then found to be in need of major repairs. Since the original bridge had seldom been opened in the latter years of its life and the present bridge had never been opened due to faulty lifting gear, the Council repaired the bridge with a permanent decking in 1923. The transverse decking was replaced by longitudinal decking which was overlayed with bitumen. Lines for the tramway to Sumner were carried on the bridge and water mains were hung underneath. The original lifting machinery was also removed and the bridge was a permanent fixture. To meet the request and open the bridge would have meant the virtual demolition of the central span. This job was estimated to cost £300 and would take three weeks, with a consequent dislocation of traffic to Sumner and the eastern hill suburbs.

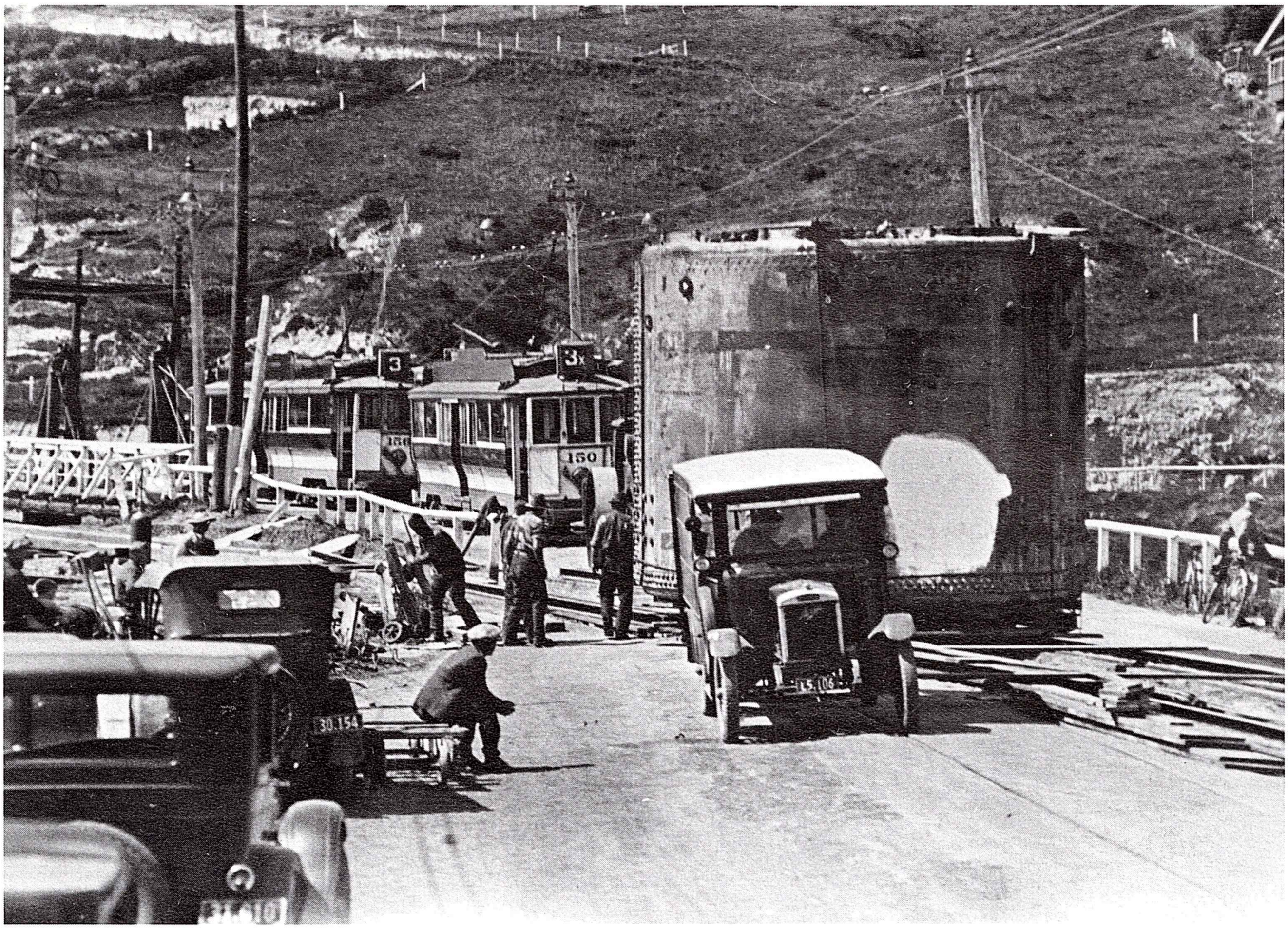
The Council sought the opinion of a local solicitor, R J Loughnan. In his opinion, while the approval for the original bridge contained the proviso that it be so constructed as "not to impede the navigation of the river", no such wording was contained in the approval for the present bridge. In fact, some doubt existed about the approval for construction of the bridge. Plans of the bridge had been submitted to the Governor by the Lyttelton Harbour Board, which then had control over the waters of the Estuary. According to Marine Department records the plans were approved by the Governor-in-Council in September 1905 but the Order-in-Council does not seem to have been officially gazetted. Mr Loughnan drew attention to the fact that, although the Governor had the power to approve the bridge, he did not seem to have the power to impose on anyone the active duty of opening it, nor were any provisions made as to who could require the bridge to be opened, on what grounds, at what notice, or at whose cost. In view of all these doubts, Mr Loughnan advised the council not to admit any liability in the matter.

The Council also sought the advice of the Municipal Association in Wellington. On August 3, 1933 the following telegram was received: "Legal position very obscure. Complete investigation of facts of law will take fortnight. At present advise you strongly resist any interference with bridge. If necessary construction of bridge can be validated by local legislation". Signed J O'Shea, the association's legal adviser. O'Shea followed this by a report setting out the legal implications. His final recommendation was that the Council negotiate with Davis Gelatine and offer to pay the extra cost of transport made necessary by the closure of the bridge. He rightly assumed that, if the matter was taken to court, the offer of such a payment would be seen as a reasonable move by the Council and it was unlikely that an injunction would be granted. Local legislation to validate the Council's action and to declare that the Heathcote River landward of the Heathcote Bridge and the Avon River landward of the New Brighton Bridge were no longer to be classed as navigable waterways, was also promised.

The City Council and Davis Gelatine Company discussed the matter at great length. Whilst Davis Gelatine fully believed that it could win a court case to have the bridge opened, it conceded that litigation brought heavy costs, not only to the loser but also to the successful litigant. It therefore decided, "under protest", to accept the Council's offer of £75 towards



Ngahau *leaves Lyttelton with the Davis Gelatine boiler in 1933.* *Photograph: Canterbury Museum.*



The boiler, inching its way along Ferry Road near the Heathcote Bridge after being unloaded from the Ngahau
Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

the cost of transporting the boiler overland from the bridge to the factory. This decision was conveyed to the Council in a letter dated August 21, 1933 and arrangements for the work were put in hand immediately.

The Port Christchurch League was following this saga with great interest and wrote to the Council, suggesting that the proposed wharf to be erected at the Heathcote Bridge to allow the landing of the boiler be made a permanent structure. The Council replied that it did not intend to erect a wharf but would simply place sleepers on the mudbank to form a platform on which to land the boiler.

The boiler was loaded onto the *Ngahau*, a large scow with an internal combustion engine. On September 7, 1933 the *Ngahau* made a successful crossing of the Sumner Bar and entered the Estuary. She had the honour to be one of the last trading vessels to cross the Bar. The transport of the boiler overland was a very slow business. A temporary railway track was laid in a short section and the boiler was winched along. An old Ford tractor then dragged a portion of the track from the rear and connected it in front of the boiler. In this manner the boiler was winched about 200 yards a day. During this operation Princes Street (now Rutherford Street) was closed to all vehicular traffic. Eventually the boiler arrived safely at its destination.

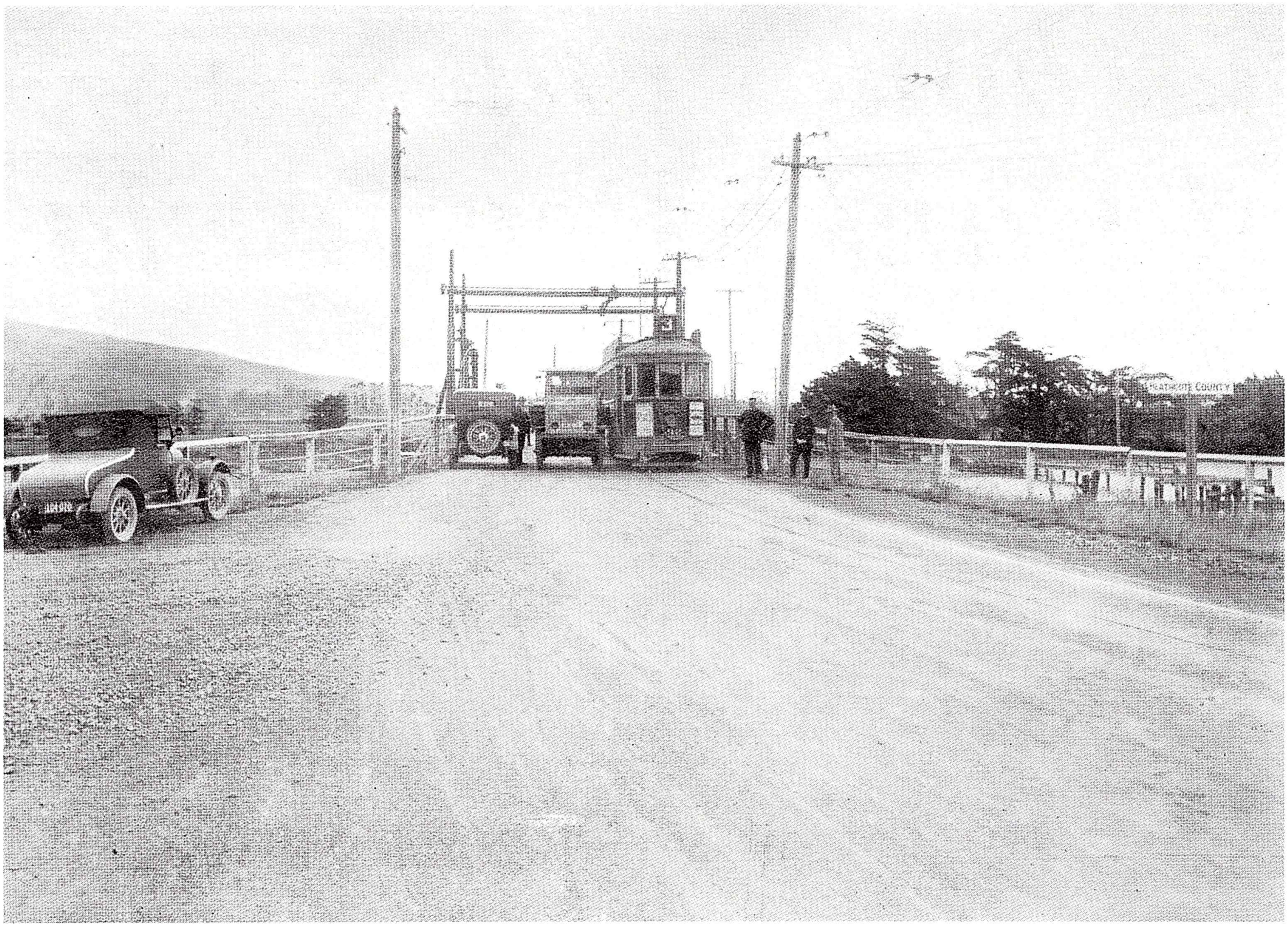
With modern transport and a wide road tunnel no one has since been tempted to request the opening of the waterway.[103]

the present Heathcote bridge

By the end of the Second World War the bridge was becoming a bottleneck for the increasing volume of traffic travelling between the city and the eastern suburbs. Being upstream from the original bridge made this present structure disadvantageous to the passage of traffic. The alignment of the approach roads at both ends of the bridge slowed the traffic unnecessarily. Built to what appeared to be an adequate width of 24 feet, it had been found by 1942 that the carrying capacity of the bridge would not meet the needs of the future. Another restraining factor was the fact that the tramlines were placed to one side – the north – of the bridge. This meant that a motor vehicle travelling towards Sumner was liable to meet a city-bound tram head-on on the bridge. The difficult alignment meant that the on-coming vehicle could not be seen until the last moment. Difficult during the day, this situation became almost impossible at night and in foggy weather.

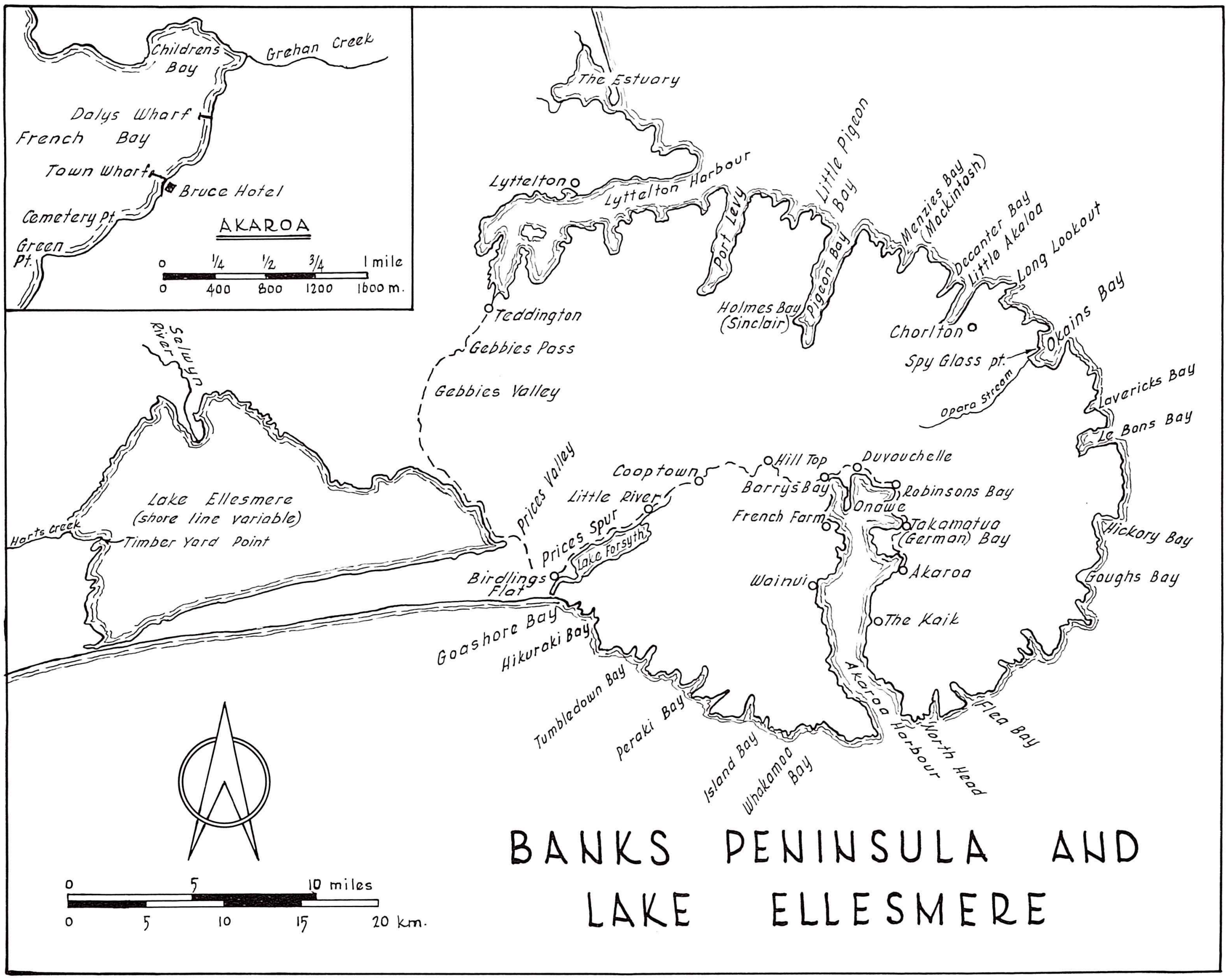
As money and manpower became available in the post-war years, plans were drawn for a replacement bridge, but it was to be 1967 before the new bridge was opened to the public.

Constructed of reinforced concrete, the third Heathcote Bridge was built into the curve of the Sumner Road, thus eliminating the bottleneck at this point. The trams had long since disappeared, thereby removing yet another restriction. The bridge stands today on the original site of the ferry and first swing bridge.



To demonstrate the inadequacy of the Heathcote Bridge, tests were carried out in 1926. The clearance between the truck and the tram was only two inches. Although everyone was agreed that the bridge should be replaced, it was 1967 before the new bridge was opened. *Photograph: Les Dew Collection.*

harbours and bays of Banks Peninsula



The decline in whaling around the Peninsula coincided with the arrival of the Canterbury settlers in 1850. The growing town of Christchurch, along with those in North Canterbury, required a vast quantity of building timber, posts, piles, sleepers, palings, shingles, telegraph poles and firewood.

Although there were areas of bush on the plains, lack of suitable transport across wide rivers and through swamps made this timber relatively inaccessible. In fact, the most accessible timber supplies were those on Banks Peninsula and by 1851, there were 395 licensed sawyers at work on Crown Land in the area.

Hand sawyers, mostly runaway sailors and former whalers, set up in many bays. They started at the water's edge, cutting back into the valleys. There was so much timber on the Peninsula that it was expected to supply the needs of Christchurch for a hundred years. In reality it was cut out in a short time.

Prior to 1854 all timber was laboriously pit-sawn, but in that year Canterbury's first water-powered saw-mill was established at Robinsons Bay. It was owned by John Pavitt who, with his family, had arrived at Akaroa aboard the *Monarch* in April 1850, after an arduous voyage from England. On the same ship was a young architect, artist and engineer of marked talent, named Samuel Charles Farr, who also decided to settle at Akaroa.

Farr was engaged to Pavitt's elder daugher, Mary Ann, and soon after settling at Akaroa the couple were married in what was the first marriage solemnized in Canterbury. He fashioned the wedding ring from a golden sovereign.

Farr was soon employed in establishing the pioneer flour mill at Akaroa and Pavitt's sawmill at Robinsons Bay. His work was not confined to Akaroa. In 1862 he shifted to Christchurch and designed Presbyterian churches at Lyttelton, Leeston, Kaiapoi and Christchurch. He designed the first iron verandahs in New Zealand, but his best-known work must be the Normal School, now known as Cranmer Court.

At its height sawmilling had been a lucrative business for the mill owners. For instance, the Pavitts were earning £100 a month from their mill at Robinsons Bay – very good money at that time. In 1857 as much as 600,000 feet of sawn timber were shipped from Akaroa to Lyttelton.

Little of the sparse areas of bush on the Canterbury Plains, at Kaiapoi, Papanui and Riccarton, survived into the 1860s. This placed a greater strain on the valuable stocks of totara, matai and kahikatea which abounded on the Peninsula. At the industry's peak, over a dozen sawmills were at work.

Along with the sawmills came many ancillary jobs for carpenters, engineers, saw sharpeners and blacksmiths, who both built and worked in the mills and built the tramways, bridges and jetties.

Life in these isolated bays was a lonely but happy existence, with sawyers earning £5 to £6 per week. Communication with the outside world was almost non-existent. Supplies from passing ships were eagerly awaited. One fairly regular caller was the 200 ton brig *Mountain Maid* which traded out of Sydney and periodically called at the Peninsula bays and Akaroa. Her holds were a veritable treasure chest, containing everything from a needle to an anchor, and her visits gave the sawyers a chance to purchase much-needed supplies.

As the settlements grew, amenities and services were provided, such as schools, churches, post offices, stores and pubs to cater for the mill hands and their families. At the same time steamers on the Lyttelton-Akaroa service began calling at the intermediate bays along the way, thus reducing the sense of isolation in the settlements.

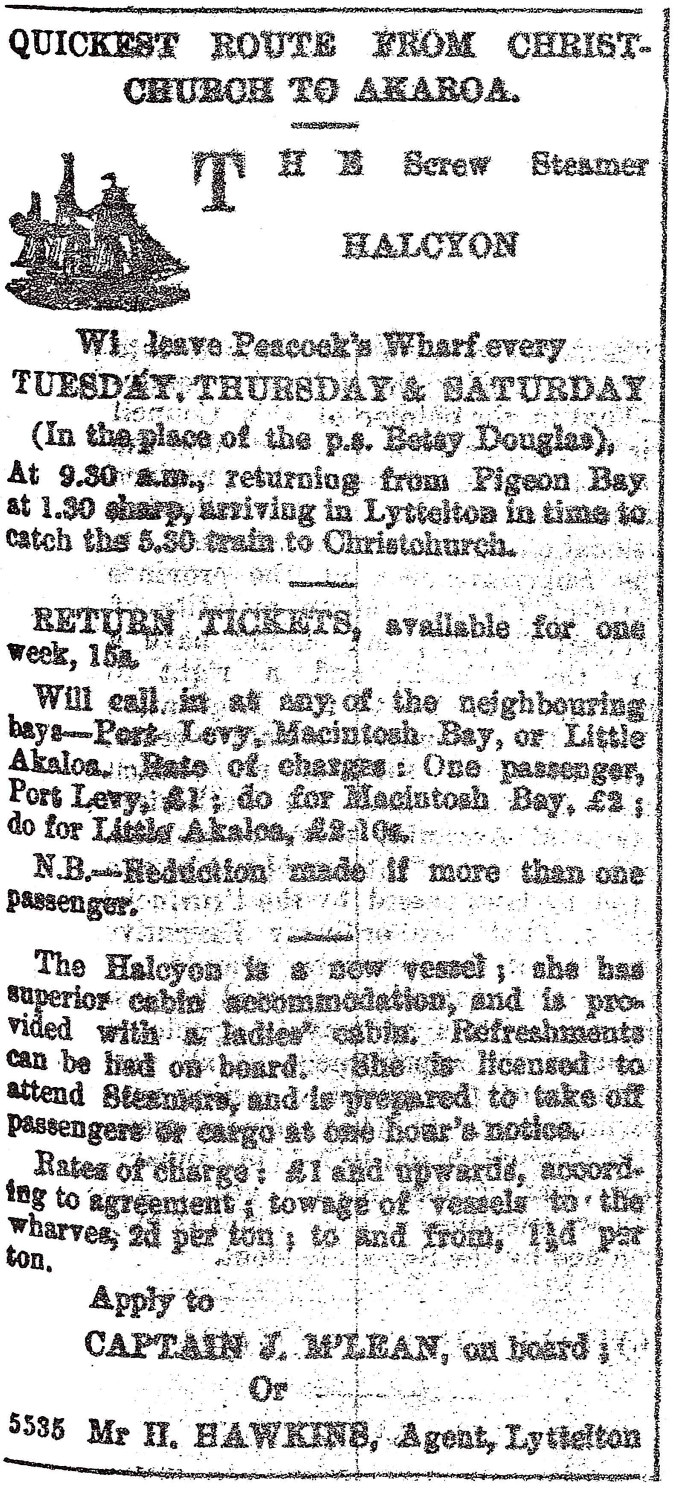
By 1900 the splendid native bush covering Banks Peninsula, once estimated to cover 134,000 acres, had all but vanished.[104]

As the timber vanished from the Peninsula it was found that the cleared lands grew excellent pasture. Both grass and cocksfoot flourished in the rich volcanic soils. The demand for pasture land became so pressing that, to the shame of some of the early settlers, some of the valuable bush was burned. Old identities of the Peninsula claim that the clearing of the bush led to a change of climate, with the original humid conditions giving way to a much drier weather pattern.

Many mill workers turned to farming and the dairy industry expanded. Eighteen small dairies were established on the Peninsula by 1857, each producing about four tons of butter a year.[105] There was a ready market for dairy products in the growing settlement of Christchurch.

Because of the difficulty of shipping the butter, many of the dairy factories turned to the manufacture of cheese. Co-operative cheese factories were established from 1895 at Barrys Bay, German Bay, Little Akaloa, Okains Bay and Wainui. Further cheese factories were opened at Duvauchelle and Le Bons Bay by 1911. All these factories were capable of producing about 20 to 70 tons annually. In addition there were 70 people on the Peninsula producing cheese on their own behalf. Despite the primitive machinery used in the factories the cheese was of a very high quality and was well known and sought after throughout New Zealand. Some shipments were made to Melbourne but trial shipments to England were unsuccessful in the days before refrigeration.

Roads came late to the Peninsula. Early travel between the bays was by whaleboat, a hazardous venture due to the quick changes in the weather. In the bays where timber abounded and craft were required for its transport, ship-building became a significant industry. Most of the vessels plying around the coast were extremely small. For example, Captain Armstrong's cutter *Katherine Johnstone* was a mere twelve tons.



QUICKEST ROUTE FROM CHRISTCHURCH TO AKAROA.

THE Screw Steamer

HALCYON

Will leave Peacock's Wharf every
TUESDAY, THURSDAY & SATURDAY
(In the place of the p.s. Betsy Douglas),
At 9.30 a.m., returning from Pigeon Bay at 1.30 sharp, arriving in Lyttelton in time to catch the 5.30 train to Christchurch.

RETURN TICKETS, available for one week, 15s.

Will call in at any of the neighbouring bays—Port Levy, Macintosh Bay, or Little Akaloa. Rate of charges: One passenger, Port Levy, £1; do for Macintosh Bay, £2; do for Little Akaloa, £2 10s.

N.B.—Reduction made if more than one passenger.

The Halcyon is a new vessel; she has superior cabin accommodation, and is provided with a ladies' cabin. Refreshments can be had on board. She is licensed to attend Steamers, and is prepared to take off passengers or cargo at one hour's notice.

Rates of charge; £1 and upwards, according to agreement; towage of vessels to the wharves, 2d per ton; to and from, 1½d per ton.

Apply to
CAPTAIN J. M'LEAN, on board;
Or
5535 Mr H. HAWKINS, Agent, Lyttelton

Shipping advertisements in the" Lyttelton Times", October 29, 1869.

Courtesy Canterbury Public Library.

Scores of schooners, ketches and barges were built in the bays of the Peninsula by ship-builders or by the millers themselves. The seas around the Peninsula and along the Canterbury coast took an alarming toll on early shipping. The fickle winds, sudden storms, rocks and reefs and the shifting bars at the river mouths all made early navigation a risky business. Ship-builders were therefore kept busy building replacement vessels to make up for these losses.[106]

The *Palinurus*, a vessel in the four ship syndicate to reduce costs in the Heathcote trade [described in the Heathcote Rivers Section] was a regular caller around the Peninsula in the timber trade. In 1877, 450 small craft to arrive at Lyttelton came from local bays and rivers.[107] About this time the 95 ton steamer *Jane Douglas* made her appearance on the local shipping scene and continued in service until 1895. For much of this time she followed an advertised timetable, making five trips a week around the Peninsula as well as one to Kaikoura.[108]

Because most of the young settlements in New Zealand had adequate supplies of timber close at hand there was no significant timber trade between the Peninsula and other New Zealand ports, with the exception of some small shipments to Wellington.

Some idea of the cargo carried and the revenue earned by these small vessels can be learned by the record of one voyage by the 21 ton ketch *XXX*, under the command of Captain Clarke.

On New Year's Day 1877, she won the Lyttelton Regatta in the Champion Coasting Vessels race. The prize was £100 and Messrs Shaw, Savill and Company's cup. Six days later she set sail for Akaroa with a cargo consisting of twenty sacks of mats, seven garden seats and one case of lamps. The revenue on that voyage was £4.4.6d.

The return voyage was more profitable, earning £14.6.4d in revenue. On this trip the cargo consisted of 37 bales of wool, 196 sheep skins, 9 hides and 5 bags of fat.

the Akaroa harbour

Akaroa is the oldest town in Canterbury. It was founded by French settlers who arrived on the *Compte de Paris* in August 1840. They set to work with a will to establish their settlement, but life in the early days was not easy. For instance, they brought grain with them but before the crops could be harvested, they experienced food shortages.

News came to the settlement that a whaler carrying supplies of flour had arrived at Lyttelton. Six men set out in a whaleboat to row to Lyttelton to obtain supplies. By the time they had reached the Long Lookout the weather had turned foul and the seas were too rough to either continue or turn back. Abandoning their craft, the men faced a long walk home to Akaroa and the settlers decided to wait for their own crops to mature. Canterbury's first industry, a flour mill, was built in Akaroa in 1842, driven by a water-wheel in the Grehan Creek.

Akaroa Harbour was a base for many visiting whaling ships which also traded with the settlers. Because of this trade, a sub-collector of customs was sent from Auckland and stationed at Akaroa. This was partially successful because he only had jurisdiction over British ships and not over the many French and American vessels in the harbour.

The Bruce Hotel at Akaroa was a favourite place of relaxation for the crew of ships after weeks of hard work at sea.

The town of Akaroa grew and soon had accommodation houses, hotels, coffee and grog shops and stores catering for local and maritime traffic. It must have presented a pleasant sight from the water because it tempted several passengers on the ship *Monarch* to leave and settle there. The migrant ship *Monarch*, en route between England and Auckland was forced to put into Akaroa on April 2, 1850. She had sustained a broken rudder after weathering a storm near Tasmania. Drifting under a jury rudder she had at last reached Akaroa and was piloted up the harbour by Captain Bruce. When repairs were completed, 40 of the 52 passengers were so impressed with Akaroa that they elected to stay and settle there.[109]

Akaroa sawmills

Many sawmills were established in the bush surrounding Akaroa Harbour. Along with sawmilling went boat-building to provide the vessels to transport the timber.

One of the first local contracts went to the mill at French Farm, to supply piles for the jetty at Lyttelton and wooden blocks for the Government Buildings in Christchurch.

The first mill at Duvauchelle was established in 1858 by William Henderson but he went bankrupt a year later. The new owners, Piper and Hodgson, ran the mill in its original water-powered form until 1866, when they converted it to steam. By 1874 Piper owned the mill outright and named it the Cumberland Mill. The 20 horse power steam mill was described as the best on the Peninsula, capable of milling 5,000 feet of timber a day. Three houses and 13 huts housed the mill workers and 28 bullocks were used to haul the logs along the tramway to the mill. The Cumberland Mill ceased operation in 1878, after milling 20 million feet of timber. It was purchased by Benjamin de Malmanche, who, with the aid of 30 bullocks hauled it over the hills to Goughs Bay where it was soon working busily again.[110]

Six vessels were built in Barwick and Wilson's yard at Duvauchelle to serve in the timber trade. At the height of the trade 30 men were employed in the shipbuilding trade, building the vessels *Vixen*, *Breeze*, *Spray*, *Dart*, *Wainui* and *Alice Jane*. The*Wainui* was later converted to a steamer. As soon as the sawmill moved on, the shipbuilding business ceased.

The Pavitts at Robinsons Bay survived a bush fire in 1856 and kept their mill until 1864. They used bullocks to haul the logs to the mill. The new owners, Saxon and Williams, converted the mill to steam power and produced one million feet of sawn timber a year, employing 40 men. They built a four mile tramway up the valley to bring logs to the mill. Sawn timber was originally punted to vessels at anchor in the bay but later a jetty was built and connected to the mill by a tramway.

The 27 ton ketch *Thetis* was built at Robinsons Bay in 1860 to help with the shipment of timber. Unfortunately she had a short life and was wrecked at Kaiapoi on December 18, 1865.[111]

Further sawmills were established at Wainui and Takamatua, with three at the Kaik. The first vessel built at Akaroa – the cargo punt *Alpha*– was launched on January 16, 1858 to assist the timber-handling.

Edward Latter, an Akaroa businessman, established a steam-driven sawmill at Barrys Bay in 1873, capable of milling 30,000 feet of timber a week. In 1875 he won a contract to supply roofing timber for the Christchurch Cathedral.

As the bush retreated and the land was increasingly used for farming, a cheese factory was built at Barrys Bay. It had the distinction of being the last to operate on the Peninsula.[112]

Messrs Belcher and Fairweather had the contract to supply and deliver poles for the Christchurch to Nelson telegraph line being erected in the 1860s. The poles were collected from the sawmills around Banks Peninsula and delivered along the North Canterbury coast. Vessels were able to enter the mouths of the Waimakariri and Ashley Rivers and Saltwater Creek. This was comparatively safe, although the *Thames* was wrecked at the Ashley mouth in this trade. North of Waipara there were no convenient river mouths and the ships had to stand out to sea while the poles were rafted ashore, onto open beaches.

One vessel used in this trade was the 22 ton ketch *Crest*, which sailed from Akaroa in October 1868, loaded with telegraph poles. In clear weather on October 28, 1868, the *Crest* was wrecked at Flea Bay near the Akaroa Heads. There was much speculation as to why the ship had run ashore in clear weather. It was suggested that the helmsman had fallen asleep, but this was never proved. Some crewmen managed to come ashore in a boat to raise the alarm, but the captain, along with some passengers who could not swim, stayed with the ship. They were later able to scramble ashore onto a rocky ledge. Many small boats left Akaroa to attempt to rescue the survivors. Although they could see the men trapped on the ledge, it was not possible to get in close enough to take them off. After three days, the survivors, weakened by lack of food and exposure, slipped off the ledge one by one and were drowned.

The 19 ton ketch *Mary Louise* was built at Akaroa in 1864. It was bought by George Armstrong for the Akaroa-Wellington timber trade. Later, in partnership with Daly, he took command of the top sail schooner *Challenge*. With this vessel he plied from Akaroa and the Peninsula bays carrying timber from the sawmills to the merchants' yards in the Heathcote River.

Akaroa Harbour is open to sudden storms from the south-west. One such storm was responsible for wrecking the 38 ton ketch *Glimpse* on November 10, 1875. Running up the harbour, with poor visibility, *Glimpse* was caught in a cross-wind and swept broadside onto the rocks, at the Kaik, a Maori village near Akaroa.

Akaroa Wharf, circa 1900, showing crowds disembarking from two flag-bedecked steamers, probably for the local regatta.
Photograph: Alexander Turnbull Library.

Akaroa lighthouse

In an attempt to make the seaway around the Peninsula safer, beacons and lights were erected at strategic locations.

A lighthouse was erected on Akaroa North Head and first lit in January 1880. Situated 270 feet above sea level, the flashing white light could be seen for 22.8 miles in clear weather. After serving mariners for a century, the lighthouse was replaced by an automatic light.

The old lighthouse was later shifted into Akaroa and re-erected at Cemetery Point overlooking the harbour.

passenger services

From the outset Akaroa was always a tourist resort. An advertisement in the "Lyttelton Times" in December 1857 stated that the steamer *Zingari* would make an excursion trip to Akaroa for the New Year festivities. *Zingari* was a wooden ship, more on the lines of a pleasure yacht. Normally trading between Lyttelton and Manakau, it ran some excursions in the summer months. The excursion to Akaroa, it was stated, would enable passengers to view the beautiful bays on the eastern side of Banks Peninsula, as well as spend a whole day at Akaroa. For this trip the fare was £1 in the fore-cabin and £2 in the saloon. Any refreshments purchased on board were an extra charge. The vessel would also carry a limited amount of cargo for 30/- a ton. For many years the annual Akaroa Regatta, held on Canterbury Aniversary Day, December 16, was a popular event. As many as 400 people would travel from Lyttelton by steamers to take part.

A public meeting was held in Akaroa on August 5, 1857 to consider the establishment of a regular shipping service to Lyttelton. The *Planet*, a wooden paddle-steamer of 45 tons, owned by the Canterbury Steam Navigation Company, made the first trip to Akaroa, on March 7, 1858. The Provincial Government voted £800 for the erection of a public jetty at Akaroa on November 24, 1858. Early tenders were too high and it was late in 1859 before the jetty was in use.

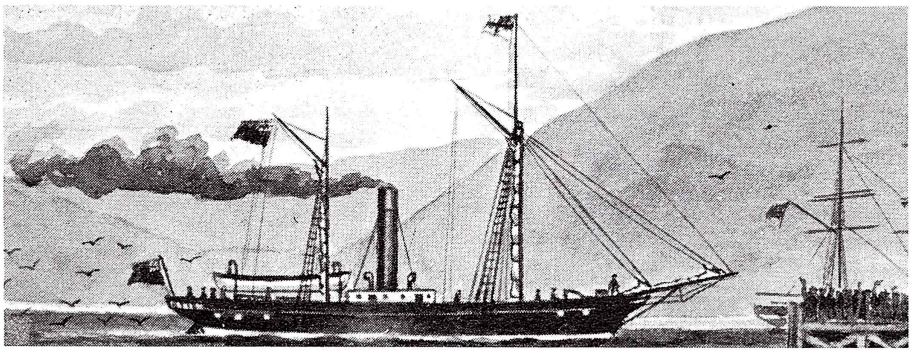
A ferry service was provided around the harbour from the late 1860s by Captain Mat White in the steamer *Pioneer*. One of the favourite destinations was the picnic spot at Wainui.

To this day Akaroa has retained its links with the sea both with its fishing fleet and pleasure craft.

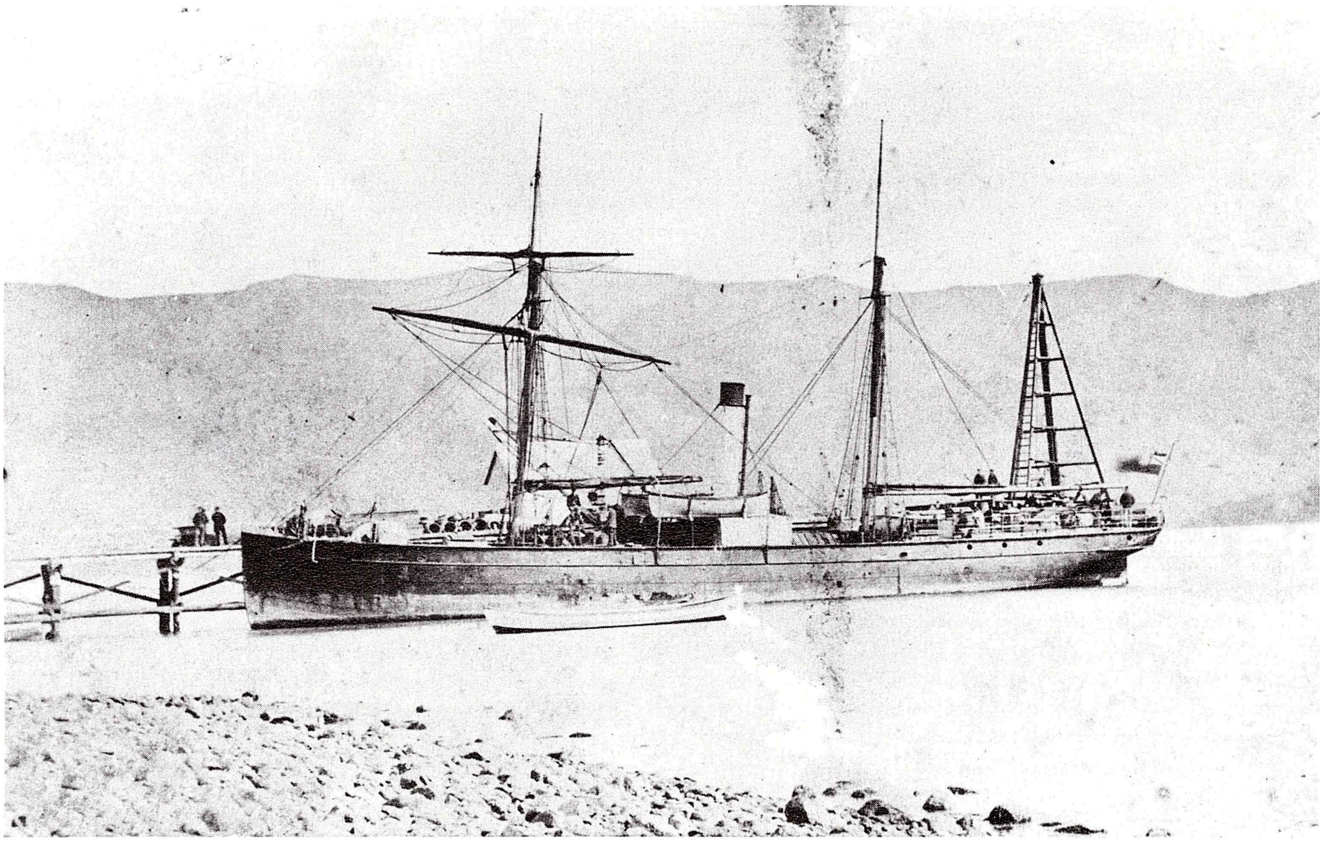
With the advent of good roads on the Peninsula, people no longer use steamers to visit Akaroa and the Peninsula bays. However, several pleasure craft ply the waters of Akaroa Harbour today, taking passengers for sight-seeing trips to the Heads. Over the years fishing craft and launches have joined in this trade, and lately these have been joined by a large catamaran.

Historic sites of the Maoris, the whalers and the sawmillers make these trips an enjoyable experience, as does the chance of seeing the Hectors Dolphin, a species which, because of the threat of extinction, has recently aroused considerable interest among the people of Canterbury and visitors to the area.

So popular have these harbour trips become that the former steam tug, *Lyttelton*, which was built in 1907 and is now run by a preservation society, spends several days at Akaroa at the New Year catering for the large number of tourists in the town.



The trim looking steamer Zingari *which ran excursions from Lyttelton to Akaroa.*
A. H. Messenger, courtesy J D Wilkonson.



One of the most popular steamers on the Peninsula run was the 76 ton steamship Akaroa. *From 1877 she made four or five trips a week to Akaroa as a mail ship, calling in at the bays in between. She continued the service for at least 12 years.*

Her Captain William Cameron, was popular with the passengers who sailed in her. Following a collision with the launch Canterbury she was repaired by John Anderson in 1885.

The "Lyttelton Times" : of December 12, 1877 advised that the steamer Akaroa *would sail from Lyttelton to Pigeon Bay, after the arrival of the 7.35am train from Christchurch, to take passengers to an agricultural show. Coaches would run between the Pigeon Bay wharf and the showgrounds.*

Little Akaloa was a regular port of call on her mail run.

Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

Little River and district

William Coop and William White entered into a partnership in 1862 to establish a sawmill at Little River. Later that year Coop travelled to Melbourne to obtain the necessary machinery. This machinery, including a 32 horse-power steam engine, was shipped to Lyttelton. Although he offered £200, he could find no one willing to ship all this equipment to Sumner. After almost giving up hope, Coop found the owner of a brig who was agreeable to transporting the equipment, at a cost of £40.

After its safe arrival at Sumner the equipment was loaded onto waggons to be hauled to Little River by bullocks. It was not an easy task. The rivers and swamps at the foot of the hills of Banks Peninsula made the going difficult. Planks were laid down at the most difficult places and the loads were winched across. The journey took three months.

The mill was established in the middle of Little River in 1863, opposite the site of the future railway station. Timber used in the construction of the Great Southern Railway and the Southbridge branch railway came from this mill. To get the timber to its destination a tramway was built from Little River, for a distance of about one mile, to the shores of Lake Forsyth. The timber was then loaded onto punts and towed to the end of the lake. A further tramway carried the load across the shingle banks at the end of Lakes Forsyth and Ellesmere.[113]

The timber was once again loaded onto punts for its journey across Lake Ellesmere. As the level of the lake varied considerably thereby affecting its shoreline, the loading point shifted as the lake level rose and fell. When the lake was low the punts could only reach Stoney Point where the stream runs out of Prices Valley. When the lake was high, loading was at Birdlings Point, near the old Beach Arms Hotel. This was one mile closer to Lake Forsyth and saved on overland transport.

A small steamer was built for towing punts on Lake Forsyth and similar steamers were employed on Lake Ellesmere.[114]

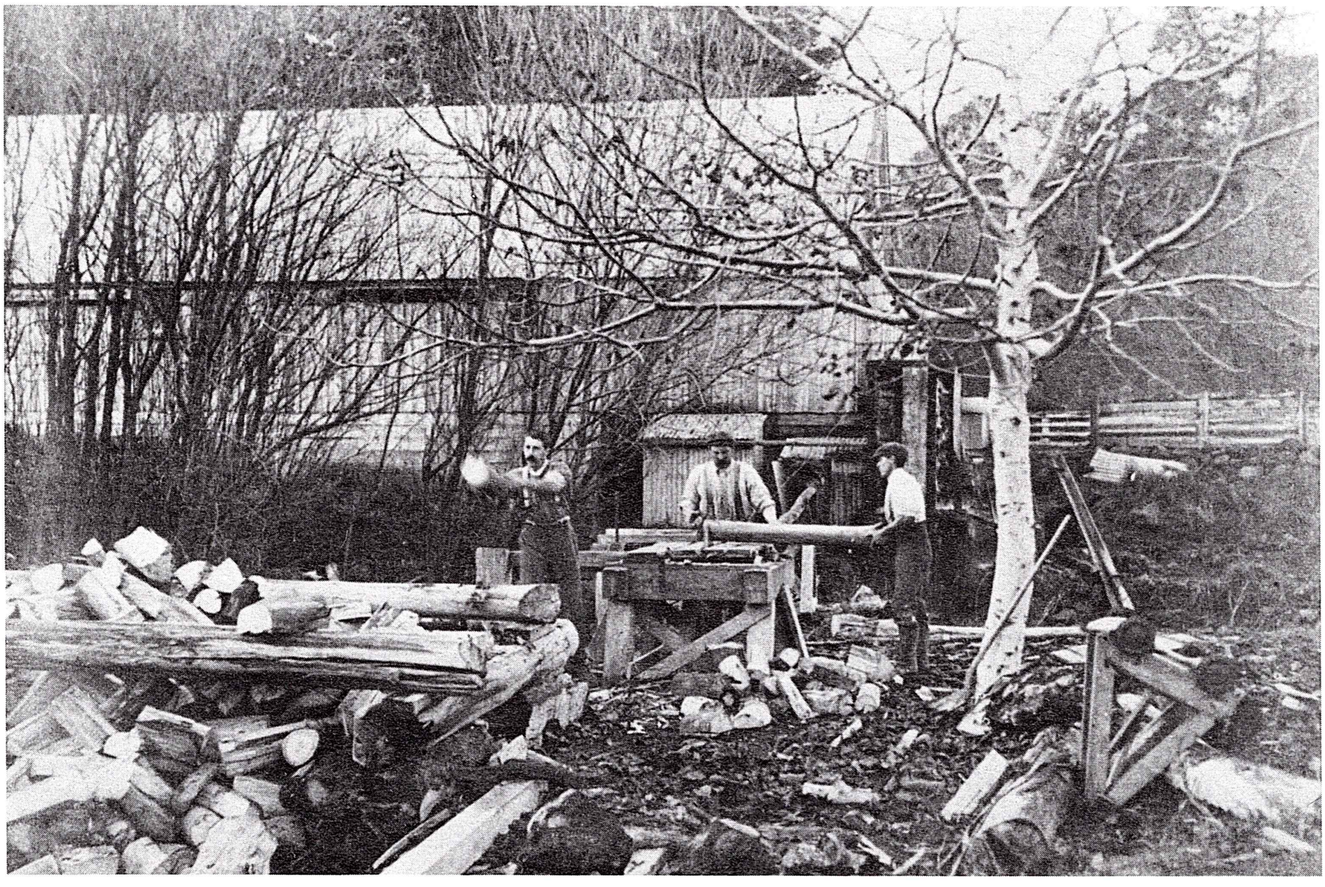
The punts on Lake Ellesmere ran to Timber Yard Point on Harts Creek, near the town of Leeston. From there the timber was taken by bullock dray to its final destination.

Land was set aside for a tramway linking Harts Creek with Leeston, Killinchy and Dunsandel. This was one of many tramway reservations laid out in Canterbury but the tramways were never built.

Timber for William White's first bridge over the Rakaia River was milled at Little River at a cost of 12/6d. per 100 feet, and transported to the bridge site by this means.

In 1871 Coop, now the sole owner, shifted the mill to Cooptown, further up the valley. From there, sawn timber was carted up over the Hilltop to Barrys Bay and shipped out from there.

In the late 1840s when William Birdling farmed his land at Birdlings Flat, he carried his cheese to market by taking it to the foot of Gebbies Valley in a boat, then hauling it across



The Little River sawmill. *Photograph: Dawson Collection, Canterbury Museum.*

Gebbies Pass on a sledge. A further boat trip down the harbour saw the cheese safely landed at Lyttelton.

When Hugh Buchanan bought the Ikoraki (or Hikuraki) Estate, in the early 1850s, he made his home and developed his farm around Ikoraki Bay, on the south coast of Banks Peninsula. Although the estate bordered the east side of Lake Forsyth, he found it much easier to ship his wool clip and other farm produce from the bay, as Lake Forsyth was landlocked.

With the opening up of the district by the railway in 1886, large quantities of timber, cheese, wool and farm produce were taken out of the area, and all the inconvenient methods of transport were replaced by one efficient service.

Pigeon Bay

This was a bay favoured by the Maoris, probably because of its plentiful supply of wood pigeons, which they considered a delicacy. It is the largest bay on the Peninsula and was a handy refuge for sailing vessels travelling south around the Peninsula, when they encountered sudden storms from the south-west. Although Pigeon Bay was considered a safe anchorage, there were several shipwrecks nearby.

The first white settlers were the Hays and the Sinclairs in 1843. At that time their nearest store was at Wellington and it was not uncommon for them to run out of the day-to-day necessities such as tea, flour, etc. Stores were also purchased from visiting whalers. The whalers were happy to exchange clothing and food supplies for the fresh farm produce available at the bay. With the arrival of the Canterbury Association settlers in 1850, the families at Pigeon Bay found a ready market for their produce, along with timber and firewood.

Timber Yard Point in Lake Ellesmere at the mouth of Harts Creek. Timber from Little River, for the construction of the bridges over the Rakaia and Selwyn Rivers, was landed here and continued its journey by road.
Photograph: Taylor Collection, Canterbury Museum.

In 1846, Captain Francis Sinclair and his sons built a cutter, the *Jessie Millar*, in order to establish trade with Wellington. He set out with his son, George, and two other men to sail for Wellington with the year's produce from several families around the bay, including 1,200 pounds of cheese and 700 pounds of butter. Also on board was a considerable amount of money, which represented most of the families' savings,

The tramway running through the bush to the Little River sawmill.
Photograph: Mountfort Collection, Canterbury Museum.

intended for the purchase of stores. Both the ship and crew disappeared without trace. This loss left several families in the bay destitute.[115]

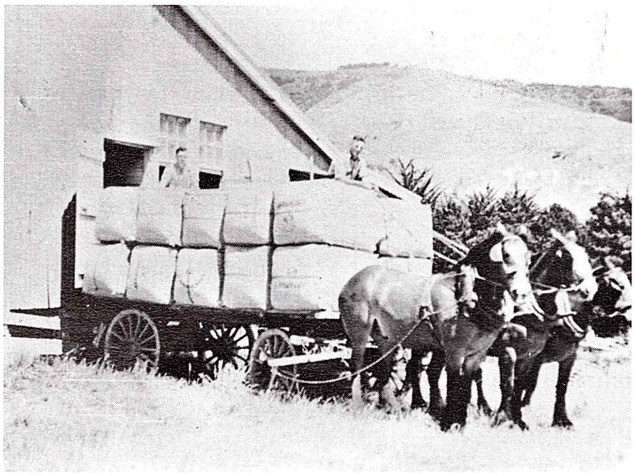
With the increase of trade between Lyttelton and Pigeon Bay, the *Planet*, a 45 ton wooden paddle-steamer began a weekly mail service to the bay. This service also catered for the cargoes offering.

A small bay on the east side of Pigeon Bay, known locally as Whisky Bay, was reputed to have an illicit whisky still in the early days of the settlement. Whether this was fact or fiction is unclear.

A steam-driven sawmill with circular saws was built at Pigeon Bay in 1857 by George Marshall, a local boatbuilder. Until that time only vertical saws had been used, and circular saws were new.

The *Agnes Hay* was built in Pigeon Bay and traded regularly between Akaroa and Wellington, carrying cattle to Akaroa.

An advertisement appeared in the "Lyttelton Times" of December 1, 1863, advising that Moses Barton would be running his boat from the Pigeon Bay Accommodation House to Lyttelton, weather permitting, on Mondays and Fridays. The return journey from Lyttelton was on Tuesdays and Saturdays. The fare for this trip was 10/– each way.



Wool on the way to the wharf at Pigeon Bay in the late 1930s.
Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

The Cygnet *makes a call at Pigeon Bay during one of her regular runs around the Peninsula, circa 1930.*
Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.

Sinclair (or Holmes) Bay

In 1862 George Holmes, the contractor engaged in building the Lyttelton railway and tunnel, purchased a small bay near the head of Pigeon Bay from the Sinclair family. Previously known as Sinclair Bay, it was later called Holmes Bay. From the bush in this bay Holmes milled the timber he required for use in the tunnel construction and the railway contracts including sleepers for the Lyttelton and Ferrymead railways. A small fleet of steamers was used to ship this timber across the Sumner Bar and up the Heathcote River to the site of the Railway Wharf.

Menzies Bay (formerley MacKintosh Bay)

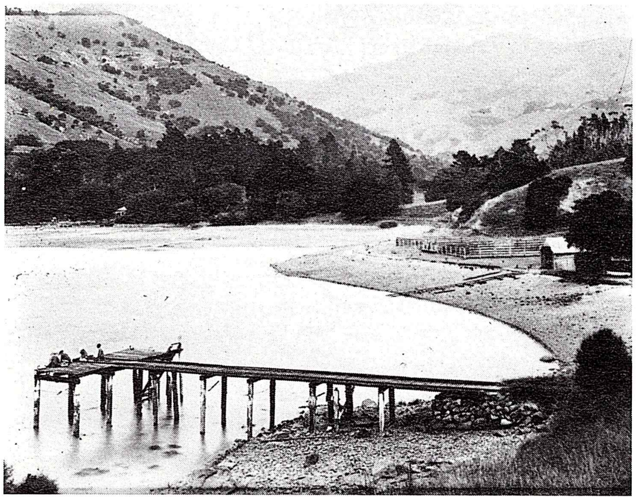
The Menzies family arrived at the bay which was to bear their name in September 1878. Since there were no roads, the family was transported to the bay aboard the steamer *Akaroa*. They were landed in one of the steamer's lifeboats because there was no jetty at the bay.

To deliver all the necessary day-to-day supplies such as bread, milk and groceries, the *Akaroa* called at Menzies Bay once a week. On the days when the steamer did not call, any passengers and freight for the bay were unloaded at Pigeon Bay and transported by packhorse.

Like many of the Peninsula ports, early loading facilities were very basic. Timber, for shipment to the growing town of Christchurch, was hauled out of the bush by bullock teams, dropped over a cliff, and loaded onto scows from a platform built on the reef near Tam O'Shanter Rock.

It was not long before the erection of a jetty became an urgent priority. The first jetty was long enough to allow vessels to tie up at high tide and sit on the sandy bottom between tides while the timber was loaded. The jetty was rather inadequate and was soon replaced by one which could be used in all states of the tide. A road was cut along the hillside to give good access to the jetty.

The irregular visits of the vessels trading around the Peninsula soon grew into a scheduled service and, by the 1890s a steamer called three days a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, with mail, freight and passengers. Sheep, wool and cocksfoot were the main cargoes lifted at Menzies Bay. In good years as many as 4,000 sacks of cocksfoot seed would cross the wharf. Without this shipping service the farms and sawmills of the Peninsula could not have survived. The alternative to shipping sheep would have been to drove them over the hills to Little River and rail them to Christchurch.



Above: Holmes Bay on the western side of Pigeon Bay. Timber for the building of the Lyttelton Tunnel and Railway was milled and shipped from here in the 1860s by George Holmes, the contractor.

Photograph: Taylor Collection, Canterbury Museum.

It was 1928 before a road was built to Menzies Bay. Until the 1930s, the Pigeon Bay Road Board maintained the jetty in lieu of money which would have been spent on road maintenance, had one existed. After this time maintenance of the jetty became the responsibility of the Menzies family. The jetty lasted out the shipping era. It was badly damaged in 1945 and completely demolished in a storm in 1952, when kelp caught around the piles did as much damage as the action of the waves.[116]

Little Akaloa

This bay contained some of the most dense bush in the area. The trees, chiefly pine and totara, were massive, some measuring 19 yards around the base.

The Maoris knew the area well, having established the Panau Pa on nearby Long Lookout Point, a location which commanded a good length of coastline in either direction.

Regular settlement started in 1849 when pit-sawyers cut the bush to fulfil orders for Captain Thomas. The first sawmill was built in 1860. As the settlement grew, amenities were added. The school was established in 1862, followed by the post office a year later. The mail came to the bay in a whaleboat, rowed from Lyttelton by G Ashton. From Little Akaloa the mail was carried overland to Okains Bay.

Logs from the bush were brought to the mill by a tramway from the head of the bay. At first, sawn timber was loaded by lighters but a wharf, built in the 1870s, made this operation easier. Little thought was given to the location of the wharf. When it was finished it was found to be in an exposed position and was soon re-built in a more sheltered location.

A church was built in the settlement in 1882, to be replaced in 1906 by the present stone church.

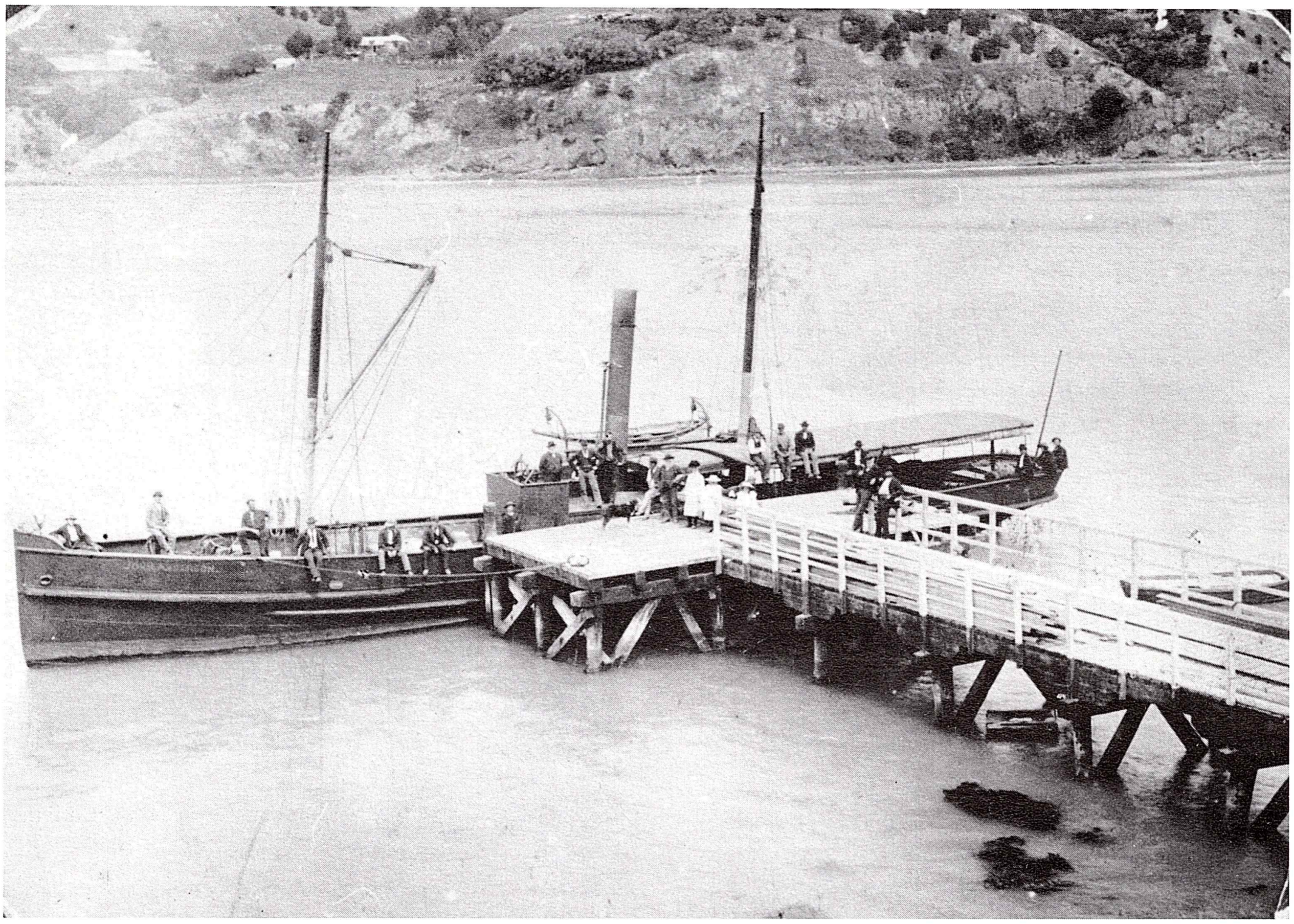
Little Akaloa had its share of shipwrecks. One vessel, *Struggler*, which had run aground in the bay was re-floated by a later tidal wave. Another vessel, the 18 ton cutter *Dayspring* parted her cables at the wharf and was driven ashore in a storm on May 31, 1904.

In these isolated communities one of the greatest fears, after isolation and shipwreck, was bush fires. If a fire got out of control in the dense bush the community had little chance of fighting it and it could burn for weeks, destroying much valuable timber.

Most of the timber in the bay was cut out by the early 1870s and the mill was shifted to nearby Chorlton, where three mills operated in the 1880s and 90s. Decanter Bay, on the west side of Little Akaloa, produced firewood. Nearly 1,000 cords of matai was split and hauled by bullocks to the Little Akaloa wharf, where it was sold at £1 a cord, to be shipped to Lyttelton.

While in this trade the 17 ton ketch *Elizabeth Ann* dragged her anchors in a south-west gale and drifted onto the rocks of Decanter Bay. Her two-man crew spent a miserable night on the rocks before they were rescued by a boat from Little Akaloa.

After the timber was cut out the district turned to farming. Vessels called regularly at the bay to lift cargoes of cheese, wool, grass seed and some firewood.[117]



Passengers arriving at Little Akaloa aboard the John Anderson.

Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.

Okains Bay

From the large number of artifacts found in the area it is certain that the Maoris used Okains Bay. It is thought, however, that their main settlement was at Pa Island further eastward around the coast. This site was probably easier to defend than the bay. The first European settlers were chiefly runaway sailors in the late 1840s. Timber was plentiful and soon 20 to 30 pit-sawyers were working. They would saw enough to get money for provisions and grog. When these ran out they would be back to sawing again. Whalers often called at Okains Bay to obtain timber spars to replace those lost in storms at sea. By 1850 there was a rough track to Akaroa and Robinsons Bay but the sea remained the chief means of communication. With eels and plenty of game in the bush there was no difficulty for a man with a gun to live off the land.

The Opara Stream, which flows into Okains Bay, is tidal for at least a mile from the sea and can be navigated by fair-sized vessels. It was therefore a logical port for shipping timber. In the early 1850s J E Thacker, who had timber yards at the Bricks and at his wharf in the Heathcote, erected a sawmill at the bay, from which timber was shipped to the Bricks Wharf up the Avon, or to Lyttelton. By the 1870s, Thacker's steam–powered mill at Okains Bay was the largest on the Peninsula, capable of cutting 70,000 feet of timber per week. This milling operation was so extensive that a tramway was built from the top of the valley to the mill to transport logs. The ships *Alert*, *Elizabeth* and *Jeanette* were all kept busy transporting timber to build the growing town of Christchurch. The *Jeanette* used to sail to Thacker's timber yard on the Heathcote River.

Although most of the timber was shipped to Christchurch, some was destined for North Canterbury. In 1893-4, for instance, Thacker won a contract to supply and ship 500 logs to Port Robinson for the new settlement at Cheviot.

Thacker had his share of misfortunes. The *Elizabeth* was wrecked on Spyglass Point in Okains Bay when she was caught by squalls as she lay at anchor on November 24, 1864. Later his vessel *Sea Devil*, built in Akaroa Harbour for the timber trade, was wrecked at Little Okains Bay.

As in other places on the Peninsula, no thought was given to planting trees to replace those taken for timber. At the scale of logging in those early days the timber stands had only a limited life and were soon replaced by pasture. It is even recorded that some of the bush was deliberately burned by those who were impatient to start farming the land. Timber exports from Okains Bay dwindled and by 1914 the chief commodities shipped from the bay were cheese, wool and grass seed.

A wind-powered flour mill was established at the bay in 1848. In its time it was considered a modern marvel for, when a steady easterly wind blew straight up the bay, it could handle three bags of wheat a day.

From the early years the bay had a jetty for the loading of timber, farm produce and cheese. This jetty outlived the shipping era in the bay and was finally demolished in 1956.

Some vessels were built in the bay. The 20 ton ketch *Margaret* was built in 1859 for the timber trade between the Peninsula ports, Lyttelton and the Estuary. One vessel which was being built along the river in 1863 was given a premature launching by a tidal wave which swept up the bay and caused considerable damage.[118]

Anyone today wishing to study the early lifestyle and conditions of Banks Peninsula, is advised to visit the excellent museum which has been established at Okains Bay.

The steamer Orewa *was another well-known vessel on the Peninsula run. As well as carrying wool and other farm produce, she took passengers. Like the other steamers of her day,* Orewa *could be chartered for harbour cruises and picnics.*

Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.

Le Bons Bay

There are many theories as to how this bay was named. Perhaps the most colourful is the theory that it was a corruption of "The Bones", referring to the large piles of whale bones left in the bay after trying out by the early whalers.

Le Bons Bay, once the site of a large Maori settlement, was first settled by Europeans in 1857, when J Cuff and W Cuddon established a sawmill in the bay. This mill operated under various owners until 1878 when it was transferred to Hickory Bay. It was one of two mills to operate in Hickory Bay and continued to supply timber until its owner, John Smith, went bankrupt in 1886.

The schooner *Midlothian*, launched at Pigeon Bay in March 1857, was used to ship machinery to the mill at "Bones Bay" as it was then known. She was a vessel of only 20 tons, drawing 18 inches of water, fitted with a centreboard which could be raised, thus enabling her to enter the bay and sail up the stream where no vessel had previously been able to navigate.

There was considerable difficulty in unloading the machinery owing to the swampy banks of the river. The heavy engine sank in the mud but was eventually hauled to its correct location. Le Bons Bay opens directly onto the ocean and, when a strong easterly wind blew, it was a tricky business navigating sailing ships in and out of the bay. Having discharged her cargo, *Midlothian* could not leave the bay for a month because of adverse winds.

The sawmill was located about a mile upstream from the bay and, as most vessels could not sail up the stream, it became the practice to send the timber down the stream on rafts to the vessels anchored in the bay.

From the late 1850s a steam-driven sawmill was operated in nearby Lavericks Bay and, despite a serious fire, lasted till 1876. The chief varieties of timber milled in these bays were black pine, white pine and totara.

The first vessels to carry timber from Le Bons Bay to Lyttelton and Christchurch were the 13 ton ketch *Gipsey*, owned by George Weaver of Woolston, and *Maria Ann*, owned by Aldridge and Stephens of Le Bons Bay.

On August 19, 1886 during one of her regular trips to the bay, *Gipsey* was wrecked and became a total loss. Her namesake, the 18 ton ketch *Gipsey*, under the command of Captain Charlie Smith, was run down at the Long Lookout on a trip to Le Bons Bay. As the bay was so exposed to the easterly gales, many ships were driven ashore after dragging their anchors or parting their moorings.

After several owners, John Smith took over the mill in 1865 and received a contract from the Provincial Government to build the first jetty in the bay and a tramway linking it with the sawmill. Although £1,000 was spent on this project, it never worked satisfactorily. Trials to get a load of timber and later a cargo of cheese down the tramway failed and the system was left to decay. Punting and rafting to ships in the bay was re-introduced. A new mill and jetty were built by Savage and Hartstone, and later owned by Dalglish, who used a chute to get his timber from the mill on the headland to the bay. His mill supplied the first totara lamp posts to be installed in Colombo Street, between Cathedral Square and Cashmere.[119]

At the height of the timber trade many men worked in the bay. To cater for this isolated community a church was built in 1869, followed soon by a school.

Life in this type of community was difficult. Butcher's meat was a rarity and families lived on wild pigs, native pigeons and eels. A tidal wave in the 1860s did considerable damage in the bay. One house was carried bodily up the bay and the bridge over the stream was washed out to sea.

As the bush disappeared, the land was sown in pasture with great success. Dairy cattle and sheep were introduced and a dairy and cheese factory were soon established.

The bush around this part of the Peninsula was so dense that overland travel was quite an expedition and some parties of trampers were lost for several days. In 1864 the Okains, Le Bons and Little Akaloa Road Board was formed but it was 1870 before a start was made on the road to Akaroa and 1872 before it was completed. Even so, the main flow of passengers and goods was towards Lyttelton and Christchurch, so the fleet of small vessels were to be the mainstay of local transport for many years.[120]

Windy weather interfered with the ships trading to Le Bons Bay. On one occasion the *Mullogh* and the *Tongariro* were both weather-bound in the bay. An easterly gale was blowing with heavy rain and the falling barometer promised worse to come. With a full load of timber the captain of the *Mullogh* decided to raise steam and make a run for Sumner.

After battling the elements for two hours he found himself off the Bar with no pilot on duty. Faced with the choice of riding out the storm at sea or risking the bar-crossing unaided, he chose the latter, fortunately without mishap.

other peninsula bays

The history recorded on the previous pages gives an account of life and conditions in the main timber-producing bays and the difficulties of transportation to the markets. Many of the smaller bays on the Peninsula also had small settlements and ports serving the timber trade. Much of the early history of these settlements is lost in the mists of time but some interesting tales remain to illustrate the hardships of the time.

Peraki Bay

Some shipwrecks had a humerous side. For instance, when the passenger steamer *Ringarooma* went ashore in dense fog inside the eastern headland of the bay, 46 members of the crew, with 15 passengers, were put in lifeboats with the mail, and directed to row to Akaroa. After several attempts the remaining crew members managed to get the steamer off the rocks, by putting the engines full astern. When it was found that the ship was not making water, the crew decided to set sail for Akaroa. The steamer overtook the rowers in the lifeboats and picked up the passengers and the crew members.[121]

Island Bay

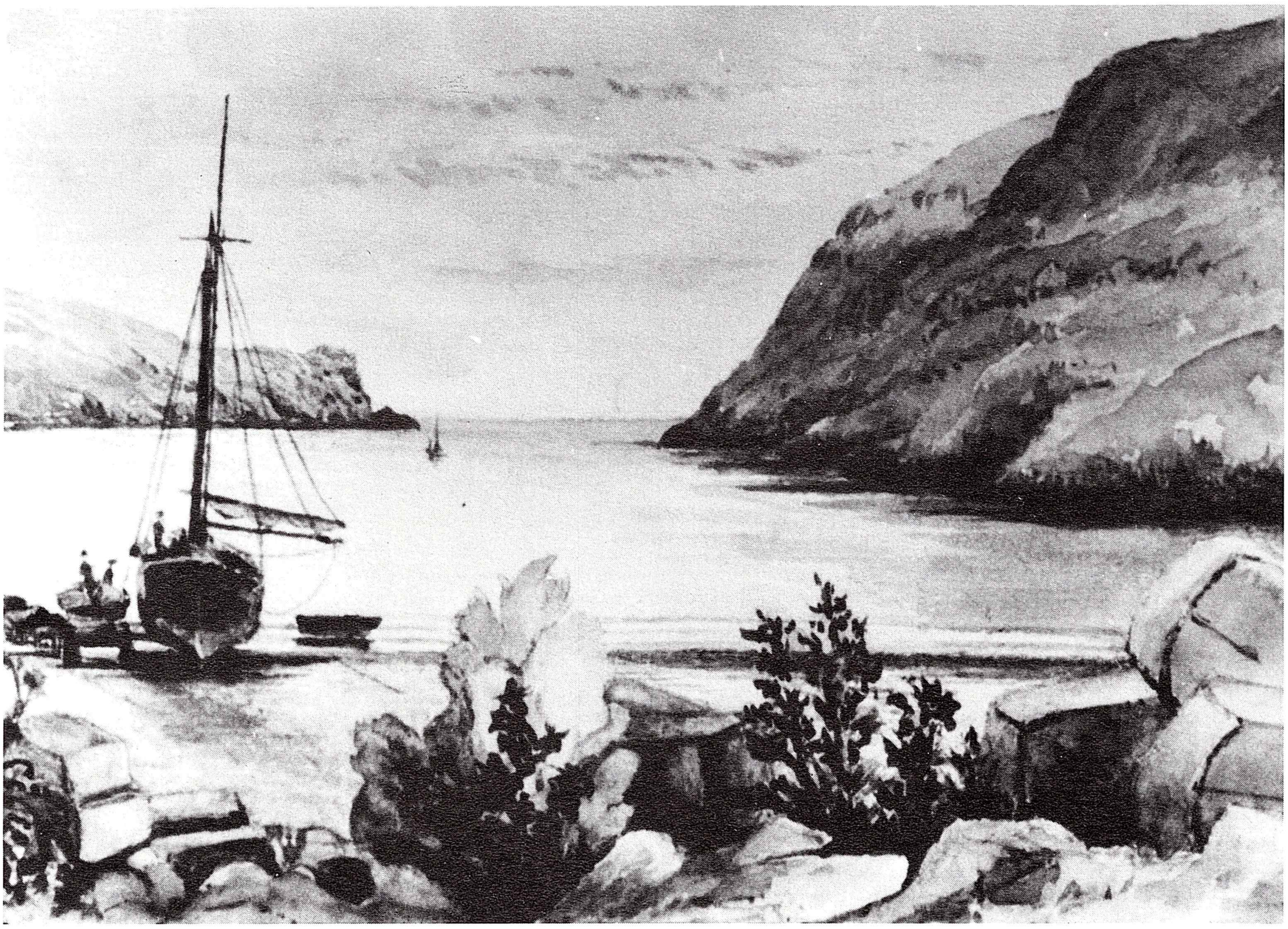
This bay is a steep, narrow valley on the south side of the Peninsula. In the 1840s whales were plentiful on this coast. When schools of whales were sighted the whole coast was busy with up to 30 boats operating. Casks for the whale oil were shipped to and from Lyttelton in small vessels. When McPhail's cheese factory was established in the bay the cheese had to be carried down to the beach on the mens' backs.

The southern coast of the Peninsula was subject to sudden, violent storms. In the days before a regular steamer service was operating, a whaleboat would be sent from Akaroa to replenish the stores in the bay. On one occasion the whaleboat, loaded with provisions, was caught in a storm and never seen again.

Goughs Bay

Because this bay, on the eastern side of the Peninsula, had difficult access, it was one of the last bays to be settled. From 1878, de Malmanche's busy sawmill cut totara, matai and kahikatea.

Ships could safely work in the bay in all but southerly weather but access from the mill to the ship was difficult. An early track was later replaced by a tramway to a point above the bay. From this point the timber was lowered into the waiting vessel by crane. When all the timber was cut out the mill was taken overland to Hickory Bay.



Peraki Cove, 1893, from a watercolour by Ella Anson. *J B Hay Collection, courtesy Canterbury Museum.*

Tumbledown Bay

According to an early Canterbury legend, Tumbledown Bay was named to recall the antics of one, Billy Simpson, a whaler of Peraki. The story goes that Simpson was sent to fetch a case of spirits from a nearby whaling station. On his return he sampled the contents to such good effect that he slipped while negotiating a steep hill. The case rolled down the hillside and landed at the bottom of Tumbledown Bay with all bottles broken.

The 98 ton ketch *Bell Flower* was caught in a southerly gale and swept onto the rocks on July 24, 1911. All except the captain were able to clamber ashore but had to walk many miles to the safety of the nearest homestead.

passenger services around the Peninsula

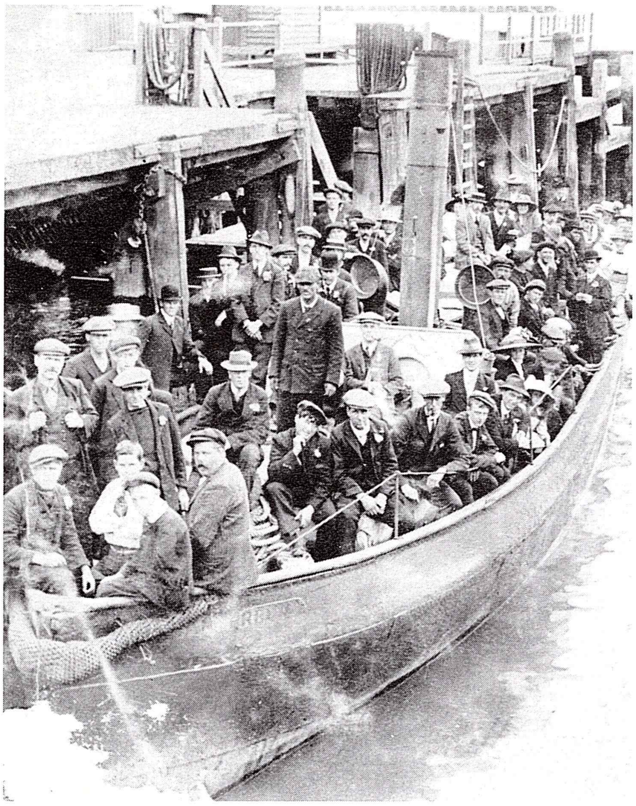
the John Anderson

When reminiscing, people who spent the early part of their lives in Christchurch before the First World War, often talk of the ship *John Anderson*. There can have been few Christchurch people at the time who did not sail on this popular vessel.

The *John Anderson* was the first, and possibly the only, steel ship to be built in Lyttelton. She was designed and built by the firm of Andersons Limited at its Lyttelton works. Her construction in 1890 created a great deal of interest. Originally laid down as *Stimsons Launch*, she was given the name *John Anderson* at her launching in honour of the founder of the firm which built her.

The *John Anderson* was 80 feet long, 14 feet wide and had a draught of seven feet. She weighed 35 tons and had a top speed of eight knots. As well as building the ship, Andersons also built the boilers and the engines. She was a very popular and seaworthy vessel and outlived her contemporaries on the Peninsula run.[122]

Until 1920 the *John Anderson* was under the command of Captain Tom Hempstalk who ran a highly efficient service, leaving Lyttelton at 8.30am, after the arrival of the 7.55am train from Christchurch. Captain Hempstalk only had a "River Ticket" which meant that he had not passed his full master's certificate. However this allowed him to sail up to ten miles from the Lyttelton Heads, as far as the Long Lookout Point, just past Little Akaloa. This covered many of the bays requiring a shipping service and, if he had passengers or cargo beyond this point, he could take a certificated master on the voyage.



The steam launch Canterbury *carrying Lyttelton watersiders on their annual picnic in the harbour, circa 1900.*
Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.

The outward journey, with calls at most bays, was run to a fairly predictable timetable. However, because of the varying times spent at each bay, depending on the volume of cargo to be worked, the homeward journey was much less predictable. People waiting at intermediate bays would often be ready for hours before she arrived, or, having given up hope of an early sailing, would sit down to dinner, only to have the meal interrupted by the whistle announcing the arrival of the steamer.

In many bays the house nearest the jetty would become almost a community centre. Here passengers would shelter while waiting for the steamer and often be given a cup of tea or a meal by their host. The house also became an unofficial post office, where residents of the bay would take their mail to be put aboard the vessel or to collect incoming mail.

As telephone communication spread around the Peninsula, intending passengers would ring around the bays to find out how far she had travelled and get some idea of when she would arrive at their bay. The steamer did not call at all the bays, especially in the early days of the service when cargoes were sparse. If people in the bay required the steamer to call to take on passengers or cargo a flag was hoisted at the end of the jetty during the day or a light was displayed at night.[123]

In his book, "The Story of Menzies Bay", Ian Menzies gives an insight into the running of the *John Anderson*. In one delightful story he relates how the musterers on the farm had had a hot and dusty day mustering a mob of reluctant lambs to load on the ship for the Addington stock market. The *John Anderson* had arrived before the lambs were on the wharf and the crew were impatient, anxious to return home. To speed things up the musterers put some old shorn ewes in the mob to encourage the lambs to head in the right direction. When the mob arrived on the wharf, the ship's crew herded them all on board. Seeing what was happening the musterers called out to tell the crew that the old sheep were not to be loaded. So as not to delay the loading, the crew dropped the old ewes over the side and they had to swim back to shore.

The sea trade around the Peninsula must have been a lucrative one. The *John Anderson* was soon joined by other steamers, competing for passengers and cargo. By 1912 a regular coastal service was operating.

The 124 ton steamer *Cygnet* was sailing from Lyttelton every second day bound either for Akaroa or Kaikoura. The 29 ton steamer *Monica* was making five trips a week around the Peninsula bays carrying passengers and an average of 13,424 tons of cargo annually. She continued in this service until she was sold to an Auckland company in 1920.

However, it was the *John Anderson* which was the favourite among the local travellers. Many people who shipped goods around the Peninsula insisted that they went on the *John Anderson* rather than on one of the rival steamers. She was a good sea boat and gave a reliable service, sailing in all weather. Many people remember her butting into a head sea with her propeller revolving in mid-air.

With several vessels on the run, passengers had to take care because they did not call at all the bays. The story is told of Bishop Julius, an early Anglican Bishop, who was on his way to visit the church at Little Akaloa. Walking from the train to the steamer wharf at Lyttelton, he must have been mentally composing his sermon, because he climbed aboard the first vessel he came to without a thought about its destination. It was not until he was well down Lyttelton Harbour that he discovered he was aboard the *Cygnet* which was not calling at Little Akaloa. Fortunately he was able to transfer to the *John Anderson* to continue to his destination.

The good parishioners of Little Akaloa remembered the *John Anderson* for more than the safe arrival of their bishop however. When the present St. Luke's Church was built at Little Akaloa in 1906, the stone and timber for its construction were carried free of charge on the *John Anderson*.

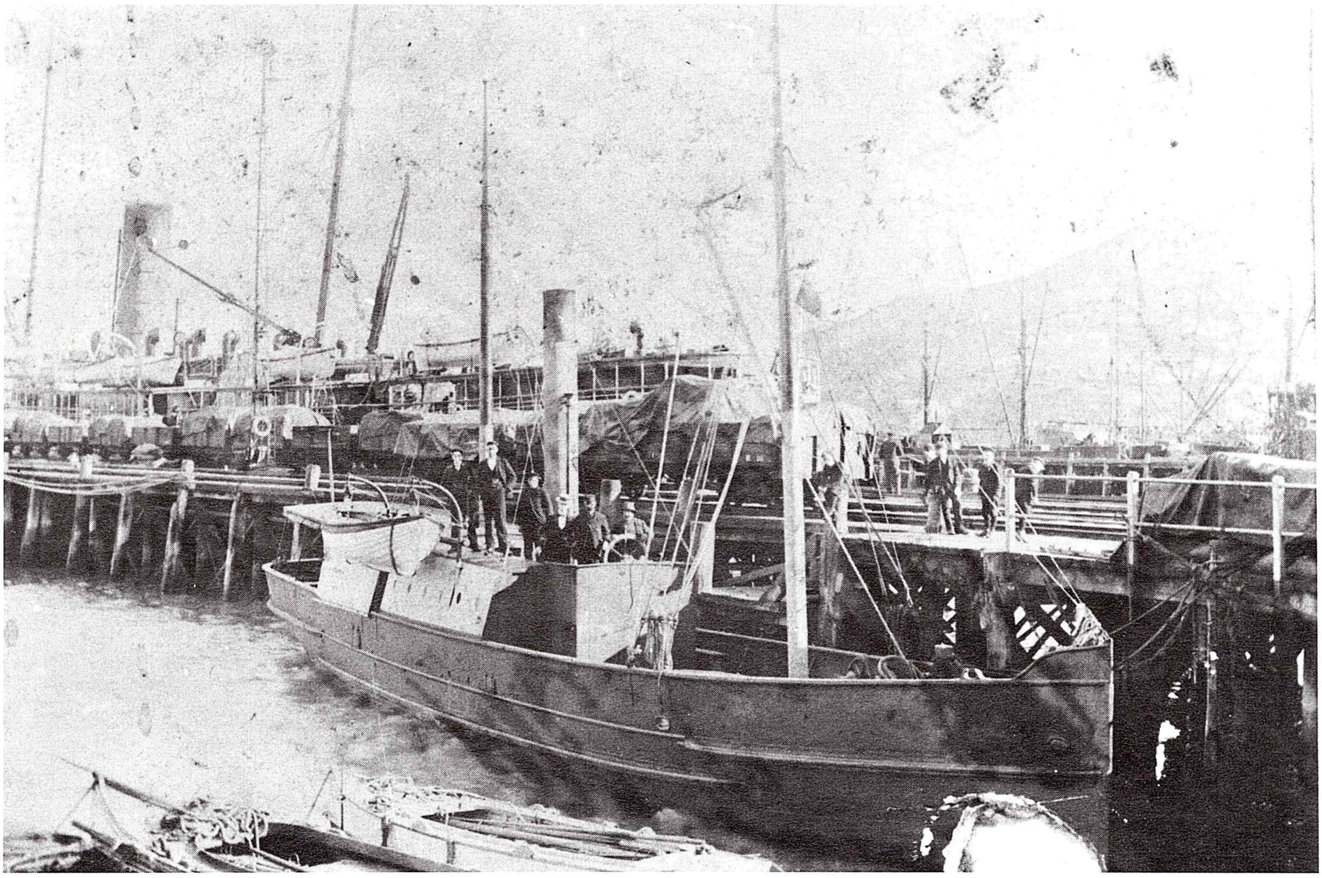
As well as being an essential transport link around the Peninsula, the *John Anderson* was kept busy at the weekends and public holidays conveying people to the many popular bays and picnic spots in the harbour and around the Peninsula. Schools, churches and business firms chartered her for their annual picnics.

Her busiest day of the year was undoubtably New Year's Day when the annual Lyttelton Regatta was held. The regatta, which began in 1862, was one of the chief sporting events of the year. If the weather was favourable, up to 10,000 people could visit the port. The *John Anderson*, assisted by the steamers *Purau*, *Canterbury* and *Waiwera*, would be kept busy transporting the crowds to the vantage points around the harbour. So keen were the rowers, in the early days of the regatta, that many would carry their boats over the Bridle Path to attend the races, then, at the end of the day, would row home around Godley Head and up the river.[124]

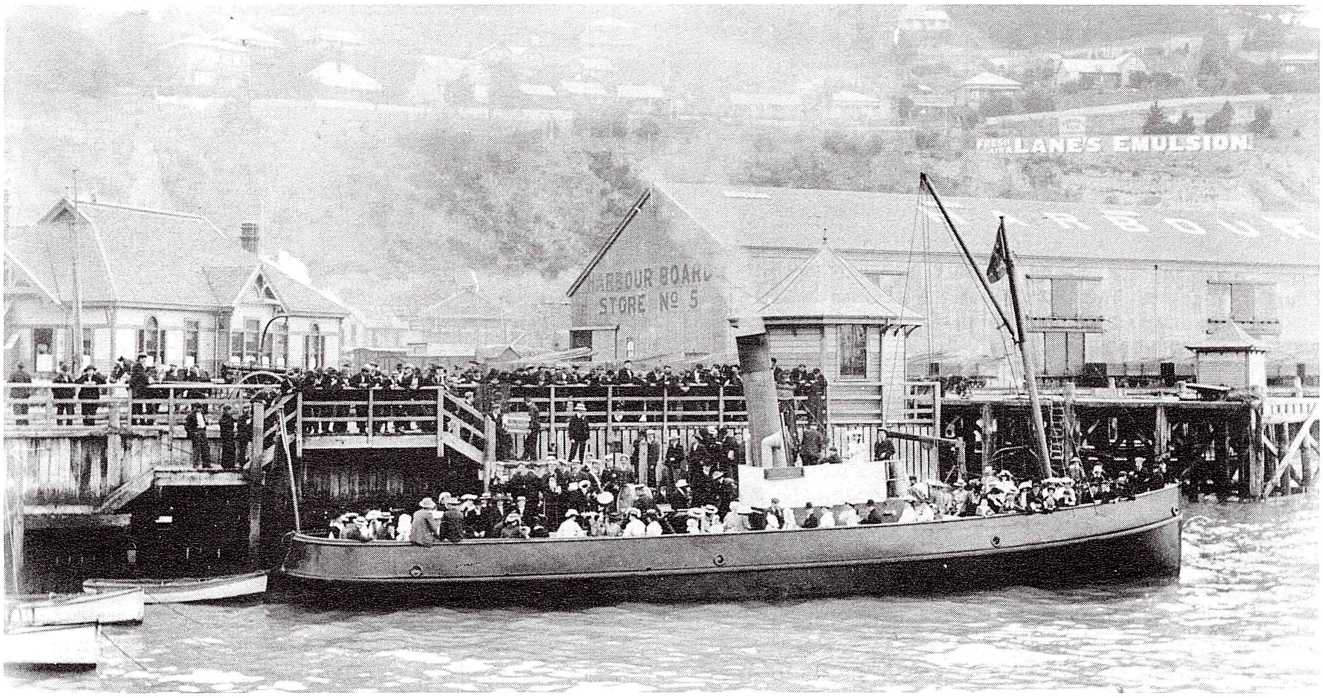
With the coming of the Second World War, the *John Anderson* was bought by the Government and used by the navy as the Lyttelton inspection vessel during the war. She would be stationed off the heads where her officers would inspect the papers of incoming vessels before they were allowed to proceed up the harbour to the port of Lyttelton. She was later transferred to Picton and ended her days under the White

Ensign of the Royal New Zealand Navy.

It was during her time of duty with the navy that she was caught up in rather tragic circumstances. In the early days of the war, the harbour pilots carried out the inspection duties until the navy took over the task some eighteen months later. On October 12, 1939, the *John Anderson* returned to port after her stint at the heads. The usual signals were flown at Godley Head and Battery Point to show that the port was closed. Later, the fishing launch *Dolphin* entered the harbour. As she passed Battery Point, a fortification near Evans Pass guarding the harbour, she ignored signals to stop. A warning shot was fired across her bows. Unfortunately the shot was off line and, instead of passing harmlessly in front of the launch, it hit her amidships, sinking her and killing one of the two crew members aboard. Although it had been the practice to fire warning shots at vessels during the First World War, this was seldom done in the Second World War. It was all the more tragic, therefore, that on one of the few occasions shots were fired, a fatality occurred.[125]

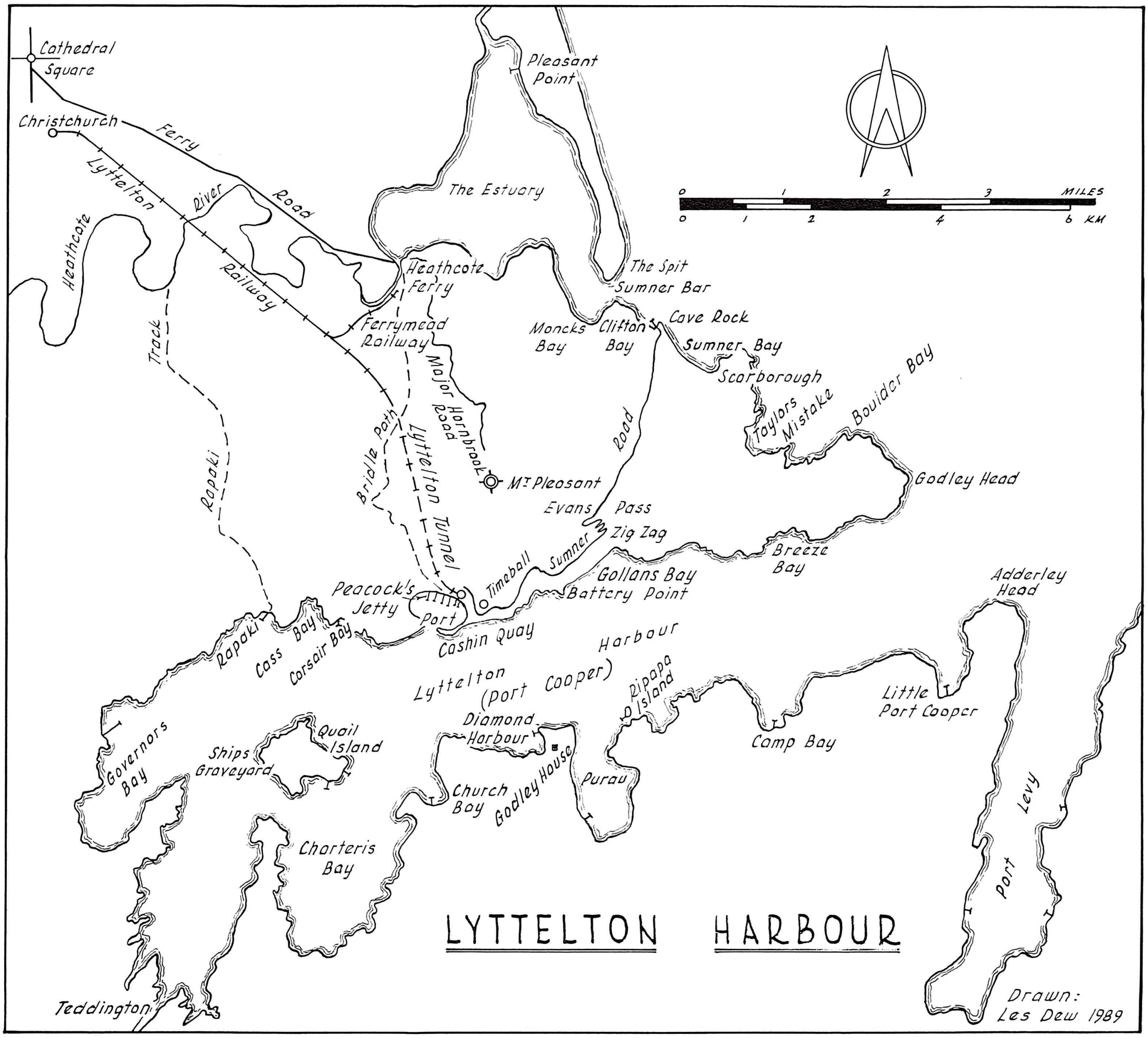


The John Anderson *at her berth in Lyttelton.* *Photograph: Canterbury Museum.*



The steamer Purau *with a full load of passengers bound for a picnic at Purau.* *Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.*

the launches and ferries of Lyttelton Harbour



Purau

The first recorded ferry service in Lyttelton Harbour started in September 1851 and ran between Purau and Lyttelton. For many years the service was provided by a rowing boat and was used to bring meat and farm produce from the Rhodes' farm to the markets of Christchurch.

From 1890, steam launches were provided to cater for the increasing loads carried on this route. As well as serving Purau the launch service provided the only means of transport for the people living in Port Levy and the bays further east. These folk would ride to Purau on horseback to catch the launch. The livestock for this area was shipped across the harbour and driven on foot to its destination from Purau.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Christchurch's first royal visitor, arrived at Lyttelton aboard the *H.M.S. Galatea* in April 1869. While the *Galatea* was anchored at Camp bay for two days the people of Christchurch flocked to the port to see her. It is estimated that 8,000 people were carried across the harbour on the vessels *Gazelle*, *Moa*, *Novelty*, *Mullogh* and *Comerang*.

Before the First World War, Lyttelton Harbour was extensively used by the people of Christchurch and North Canterbury for outings, in the days before motor transport became general. Steamers made two regular trips to Purau on Saturdays as well as charter trips for the annual picnics of business firms and other organisations. All the popular picnic spots from Governors Bay to Purau were visited by the steamers *John Anderson*, *Canterbury*, *Waiwera* and *Purau*.

On busy days when hundreds of people were passing through the port of Lyttelton many of the private houses were opened to the public to serve dinner or refreshments.

Ripapa Island

This island was once a fortified Maori Pa. The quarantine station, moved from Camp Bay, was the second to be established in the harbour and remained on the island until 1885.

In 1887 it was considered necessary to build Fort Jervois, with its four disappearing guns, to defend the harbour against a possible invasion by the Russian Fleet. Towards the end of the First World War the island was used as a jail for the German sea raider, Count Felix von Luckner.

Today the island is a scenic reserve of great historical interest and home of the Sea Cadet Corps. It is readily accessible from Lyttelton by launch.

Quail Island

With the building of the fort on Ripapa Island the quarantine station was moved to Quail Island, which also housed New Zealand's only leper colony.

Today the island is a recreation reserve served by a regular launch service from Lyttelton.

Among the attractions is the "Ship's Graveyard" at the western end of Quail Island. Here, many of the old craft which once served Lyttelton and the surrounding ports have been laid to rest and are visible, expecially at low tide. Notable amongst these is the tiny *Mullogh*, which is quietly rusting away with its boiler still in place.

Diamond Harbour

The longest surviving ferry service on Lyttelton Harbour, and one which is still operating today, is that between Lyttelton and Diamond Harbour.

Diamond Harbour is said to have received its name because the glitter of the sun on the water, when viewed from the hills around Lyttelton, resembled the sparkle of a diamond.

Before the breakwaters were built to protect the Lyttelton anchorage in the late 1860s, Diamond Harbour was a favourite spot for ships to anchor and ride out a southerly storm. Not all vessels found Diamond Harbour a safe haven, however. The 20 ton ketch *Kestrel*, for example, was driven on the rocks by an unexpected southerly which swept up the harbour while her crew were ashore, on December 10, 1883.

By 1913 some of the businessmen and professional people of Christchurch desired to live in houses with a harbour view. The town of Lyttelton was built up and, in the hilly surroundings there was no room for expansion. Attention turned to the other side of the harbour with its large tracts of vacant land with a more sunny aspect.

In February 1913, the Lyttelton Borough Council, with the approval of its ratepayers, borrowed £13,000 to develop the settlement of Diamond Harbour. An area of 356 acres was bought for £7,000 and the remainder of the money was spent in providing services, roads and a ferry service. To avoid an over-supply of sections, they were put on the market in small batches. By the end of 1926, although all the sections were sold, there were only 38 houses in the settlement.

The steamer *Canterbury* ran the first ferry service, under a six months contract with the Council. On the expiry of the contract the Council purchased the oil launch (diesel) *Ruahine*, which was capable of carrying 40 passengers and could cross the harbour in twelve minutes. During the summer months the *Ruahine* made six return trips daily, the service being reduced to four return trips during the mid-winter months. The cost of the return trip was 6d. but property owners of Diamond Harbour received a concession fare of 4d. return.

As well as commuters, the service catered for picnickers to the popular beach destination and visitors to Godley House, an old homestead built in 1880 and converted to a hostel in 1913. To the present day Godley House remains a popular restaurant for visitors to the harbour.

In 1918 Bert Rhind won the contract for the Diamond Harbour service and purchased the *Ruahine* from the Council. Rhind also owned the launches *Reo Moana* and *Moturata*.[1] All his launches were of different sizes and he could make economies in the service by running a launch of an appropriate size to meet the passenger demand.[126] Five return trips were run daily during the summer, reducing to four return trips daily during the winter.

Regular services were also run to Corsair Bay which, at the time, was rather isolated until the widespread use of the motor vehicle. In addition, the advertisements of the day stated that passengers would be carried to all the bays in the harbour and to Quail Island. Picnic parties would also be carried to the Peninsula bays.

A public company, Rhind's Motor Launches Ltd., was formed in December 1921 and registered in February 1922 to take over Bert Rhind's services and launches. G A Nelson's launch *Onawe* was also purchased and added to the fleet. The name of the company was changed to Lyttelton Ferry Launches Ltd in June 1927.

Forty residents of Diamond Harbour petitioned the Lyttelton Borough Council in 1929, requesting that the 7.30am launch from Diamond Harbour be retimed to leave at 8.00am. They pointed out that the earlier sailing meant that workers and school children had to wait 35 minutes at Lyttelton for the departure of the 8.20am train to Christchurch.

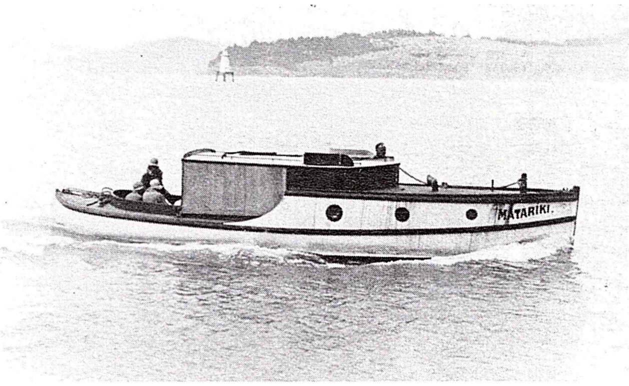
People purchasing sections at Diamond Harbour had been promised a 7.30am launch. The residents' request could only be met by providing an additional trip at an estimated cost of 7/6d. Although councillors were doubtful whether the service would be successful, a trial was agreed to. This must have been a success because there is no record of the trip being cancelled. At this time the launches *Owaka* and *Tui* were added to the fleet.

Diamond Harbour residents requested that the Lyttelton Borough Council take over the service in 1937. One irate resident pointed out that he had lost a day's pay, amounting to £3 when the early morning launch had not sailed due to foggy conditions. This, he claimed, showed that the service was unreliable. The Borough Council declined the request that it run the service but some councillors were of the opinion that the Council would have to take it over eventually. Despite some minor problems the service continued to the satisfaction of most of the passengers.

Bert Rhind became the centre of a controversial act in 1938, when he took Count Felix von Luckner for a trip around Lyttelton Harbour on his launch. At that time von Luckner, who had been a prisoner of war on Ripapa Island during the First World War, had returned to New Zealand as a visitor. The Government of the day was less than impressed by the visit and, while von Luckner was able to travel around the Harbour and have afternoon tea at Godley House, he was not allowed to go ashore at Ripapa Island.

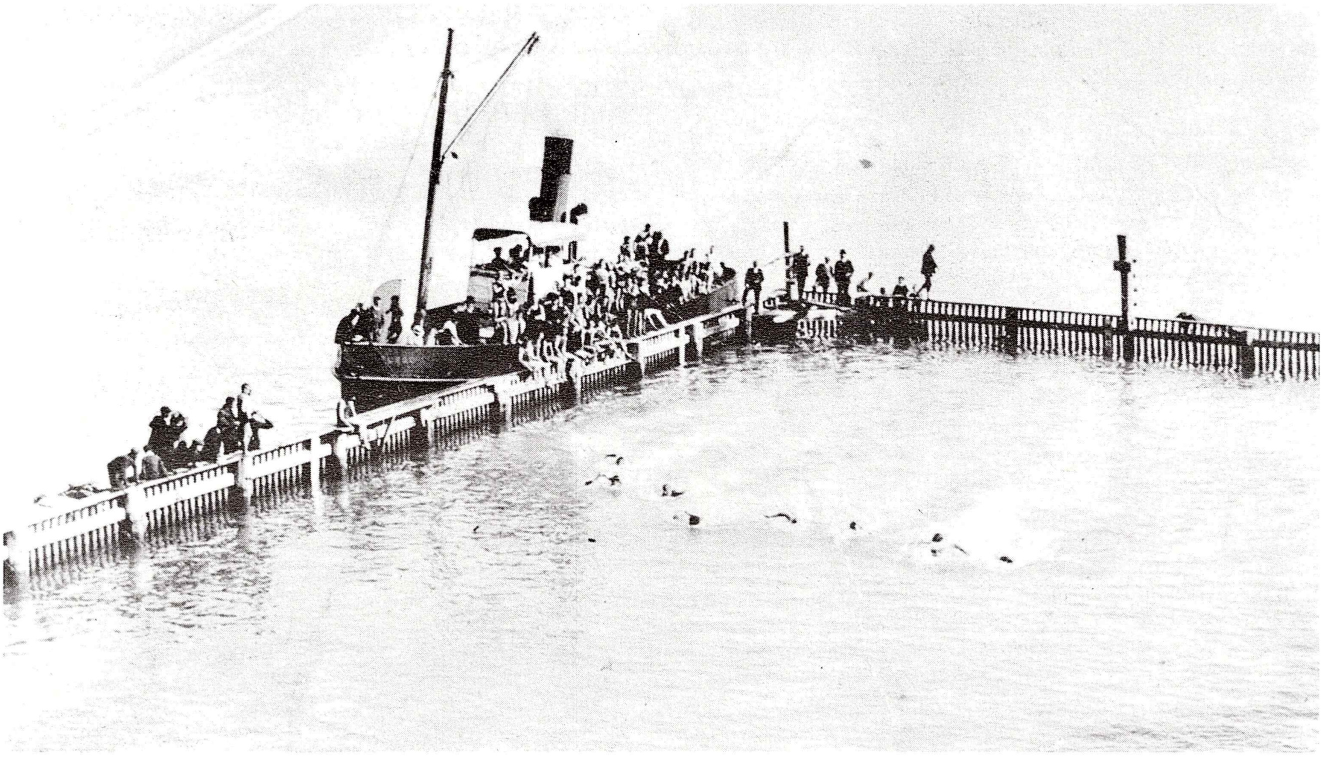
Local people were divided in their view of Rhind's action. On one hand some saw him as a hero for his apparent defiance of authority, but others who could see the world slipping towards another major war, resented his actions. Whether or not this affected his launch business is still a matter for debate.

The fact remains that Lyttelton Ferry Launches went into voluntary liquidation in June 1943 and sold its launches and stock. It took some years to sort out the affairs of the company which was eventually wound up in 1949



The motor launch Matariki *which ran passenger services between Lyttelton, Rapaki and Governors Bay*
Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.

Three well-known harbour launches set out from Lyttelton with a full load of passengers. From left to right: Moturata, Reo Moana *and* Matariki.
Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.



Passengers landing at Corsair Bay from the steamer Purau. *A swimming race is in progress in the large enclosure. Many people believe that the large wooden enclosure was built to protect bathers from sharks which were lured up the harbour by the raw offal discharged from the abattoir in nearby Cass Bay. Although the bathers took comfort in this protection, the structure was built for a very different purpose. It was originally put there in the days when mixed bathing was not allowed on Corsair Bay. Behind this screen, women and children could bathe discreetly, while the men had the rest of the bay to themselves. For many years after mixed bathing was allowed, the women's dressing sheds remained around that side of the bay.* *Photograph: Lyttelton Museum*

A new company, Lyttelton Ferry Launches (1943) Ltd, was formed to acquire the assets of the former ferry company and continued to run the services until 1958.

In the 1940s, W W Toy ran harbour launch services using the launches *Awhina Nui* and *Tarawai*. By 1944 these launches had passed to Sutton Brothers who continued the service and added the launch *Ngatoa Nui* to their fleet in 1947.

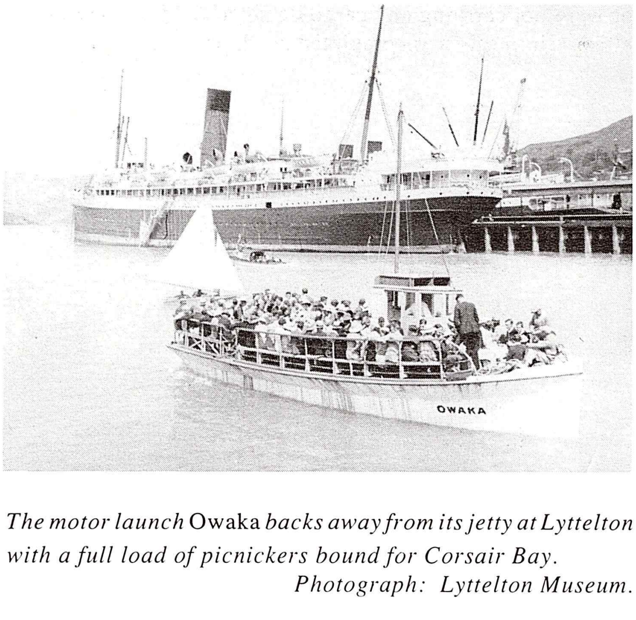
As well as running passenger and picnic services in the harbour these launches ran to some of the Peninsula bays picking up cheese, farm produce and bales of wool. This service lasted throughout the Second World War when shortages of fuel and tyres restricted road transport on the Peninsula. After the war improvements to the roads led to a much improved trucking service and the use of the launches to carry cargo ceased.

After running the service successfully for 14 years Sutton Brothers announced in 1956 that they would be unable to continue the Diamond Harbour service for more than 12 months. It was surprising that the Sutton Brothers decided not to sell the service as a going concern, but instead started to dispose of their assets. The launch *Ngatoa Nui*, after 10 years in service, was sold to a new owner in Picton and a buyer had been found for the *Ngatiki*.

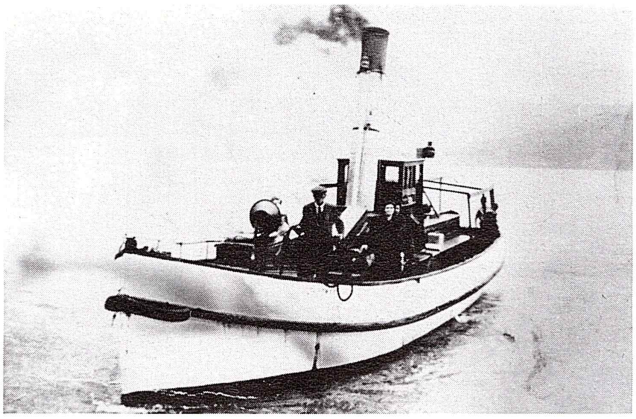
Because road access to Diamond Harbour involved a long journey around the head of the harbour, maintenance of the direct launch service from Lyttelton was essential. Since no one else seemed willing to run the launches, the Lyttelton Borough Council decided to operate the service.

The Lyttelton Borough Council decided to purchase the launches *Onawe* and *Ngatiki*, along with the launchman's house, for a total of £7,500. The Council was fortunate to obtain the *Ngatiki* before Sutton Brothers sold it to another owner. If they had been restricted to only one launch, the service would have been very unreliable. With two launches the Corsair Bay service could also be maintained.[127] Because of road competition however, the Corsair Bay service soon ceased.

By 1975 the Borough Council found that the timetable services to Diamond Harbour were losing money. It decided to tap the



The motor launch Owaka *backs away from its jetty at Lyttelton with a full load of picnickers bound for Corsair Bay.*
Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.



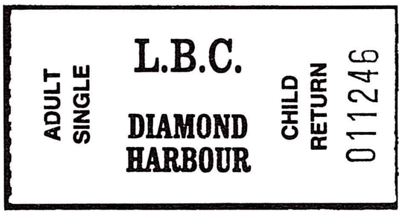
Right: The steam launch Tarawai *which was used on the Diamond Harbour service by Walter Toy.*
Photograph: Lyttelton Museum.

potential of the tourist trade by taking on more charter work, such as scenic trips to Quail Island, fishing trips and moonlight cruises. They also made an effort to dovetail the Diamond Harbour launch service into the Christchurch Transport Board's bus service to Lyttelton. A Sunday service began in 1981 after New Zealand Railways discontinued their Sunday bus service to Diamond Harbour, and this launch service has proved popular. With the local body reorganisation of 1989, control of the launch services passed to the Banks Peninsula District Council.[128]

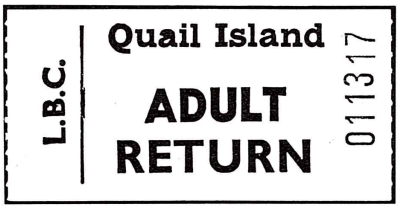
One example of the tourist operations carried out by the launches is the "Hills and Harbour" tour run in conjunction with the Christchurch Transport Board. On this tour, bus loads of tourists are given a bus tour around the Port Hills before boarding one of the launches for a harbour cruise.

An amusing story is told of the launch *Ruahine*, the first regular launch on the Diamond Harbour run, and this makes an interesting footnote to the launch story. After ending its days on the Diamond Harbour run the *Ruahine* was bought by the Lyttelton Harbour Board for various duties around the port, a job she does to the present day.

The story goes that when the Second World War began, a message flashed from London freezing all shipping movements in the ports throughout the Empire. All ships were to be checked to make sure they had no connections with Germany or were not carrying any cargo destined for Germany or her allies. Until this was completed no ships were to leave port.

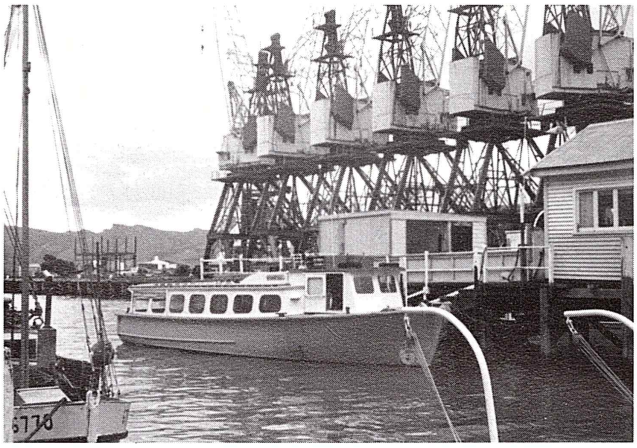


ADULT SINGLE
L.B.C.
DIAMOND HARBOUR
CHILD RETURN
011246

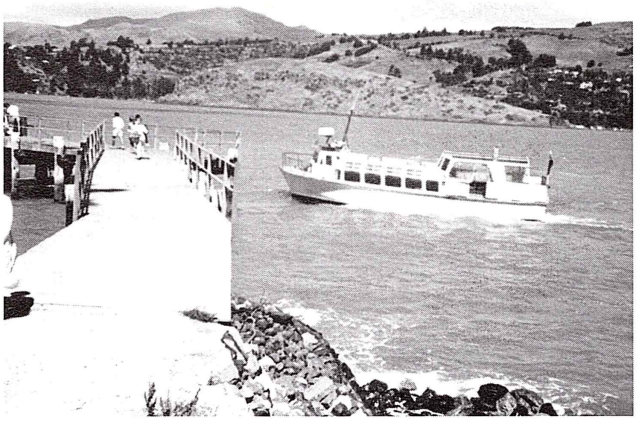


L.B.C.
Quail Island
ADULT RETURN
011317

Lyttelton launches in the present-day fleet of the Banks Peninsula District Council.



The motor launch Ngatiki.



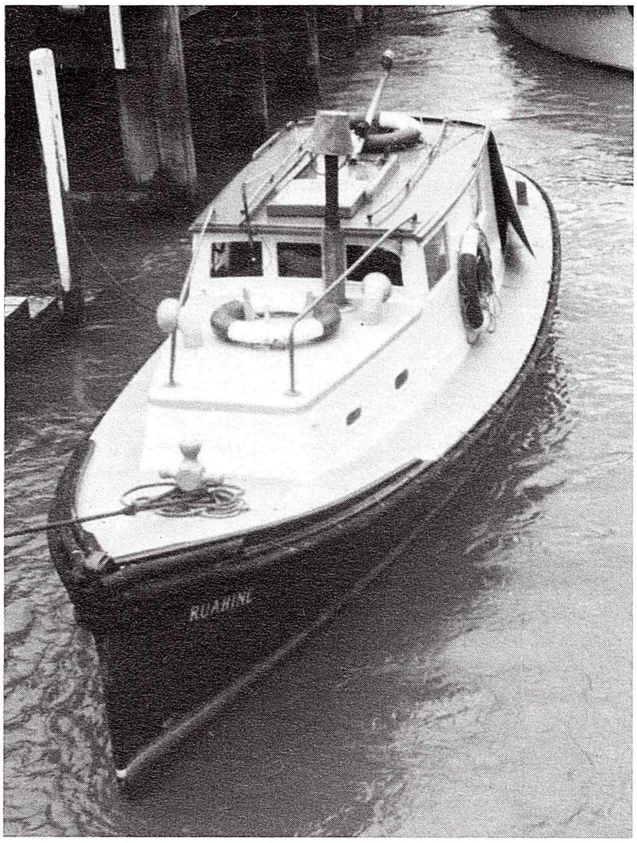
The motor launch Waipapa *at* Quail Island

The motor launch Orari

Photographs: Les Dew (1990).

The soldiers from Burnham took this message very seriously indeed. They immediately rushed up to Battery Point where the first thing they saw was a vessel leaving the harbour. It was the *Ruahine* quietly going about her business. But "orders are orders" and the good soldiers fired a warning salvo at the vessel, which quickly turned tail and ran for the safety of the inner harbour.

Because of the time difference between London and New Zealand it appears that New Zealand started fighting the Second World War before anyone else. As a consequence, the *Ruahine* incident was considered to be the first shots fired in anger against a vessel in the war.



The Ruahine *was the first launch to run on the Lyttelton-Diamond Harbour service, in 1913. Today the vessel is owned by the Harbour Board and performs various tasks around the port.*

Photograph: Les Dew (1990).

Port Christchurch

Although the people of Christchurch had a good port at Lyttelton, with a satisfactory railway connection, they were still not satisfied. Incoming cargo was loaded directly into railway waggons at the ship's side. By building the cargo-sorting sheds at Christchurch, instead of Lyttelton, the Railways Department obtained for themselves a monopoly on the carriage of passengers and goods between the two points. Because of this, many people considered that they were paying too high a price for their transport.

Over the years, proposals had been put forward to break the Railway Department's monopoly. These were variations on two themes: a road tunnel through the Port Hills or a port at Christchurch. Until a firm decision was made to build the road tunnel, the Port Christchurch factions waged long protracted battles.

People pointed to Wellington as an example of a city which had grown at a great rate because of the fact that it had a port at its doorstep. This was not a good argument, however, because there were many other factors influencing Wellington's growth. In 1894 the Sumner Canal Committee was formed and put its case to both the Government and the Harbour Board. It suggested that the old Canal Reserve along Linwood Avenue be dug out, using unemployed labour, to allow barges to operate to the city. This would still have required trans-shipment at Lyttelton or a port in the Estuary.

The Lyttelton Harbour Board was opposed to the plan, pointing out the problems experienced at Dunedin, where two separate ports were operated in the Otago Harbour.

In 1902 the Harbour Board did agree to an investigation of harbour extensions at Lyttelton. The Board's engineer, Cyrus Williams, reported in 1903 that the present port was adequate for the forseeable future. He did suggest that a full investigation be carried out on the canal proposals to lay this particular ghost forever. During seven years Williams produced five reports on port expansion, the first of these in 1905.

He considered two sites in the harbour for port expansion, Sticking Point and Gollans Bay. The Gollans Bay proposal would have required an extension to the railway. He also investigated two ports using canals. One of these was at Heathcote and the other at Wilsons Road near the Linwood Railway Station. It was estimated that, if trade continued to increase as it had over the past 23 years, revenue would cover interest charges and working expenses by 1917.

It appears that, in Christchurch at least, nothing changes. On receipt of Williams' report the various groups began to push their own views on the port expansion proposals. This led to a call for an independent report from the English firm of consulting engineers, Coode, Son and Matthews. This report, received in June 1908, did not favour the canal scheme. It found the dock at Wilsons Road to be too expensive and suggested that, if a port was required outside Lyttelton Harbour, it should be in the Estuary. However it made a strong recommendation that the port should remain at Lyttelton unless a change became absolutely essential.[129] If necessary the port of Lyttelton could be adequately expanded by wharves at Gollans Bay, at a fraction of the cost of building a canal port.

The canal supporters were not convinced and, in September 1908, formed the Christchurch Canal League. As most of the city's influential political figures joined the League, the port affairs became a major issue in the parliamentary elections held in October of that year.

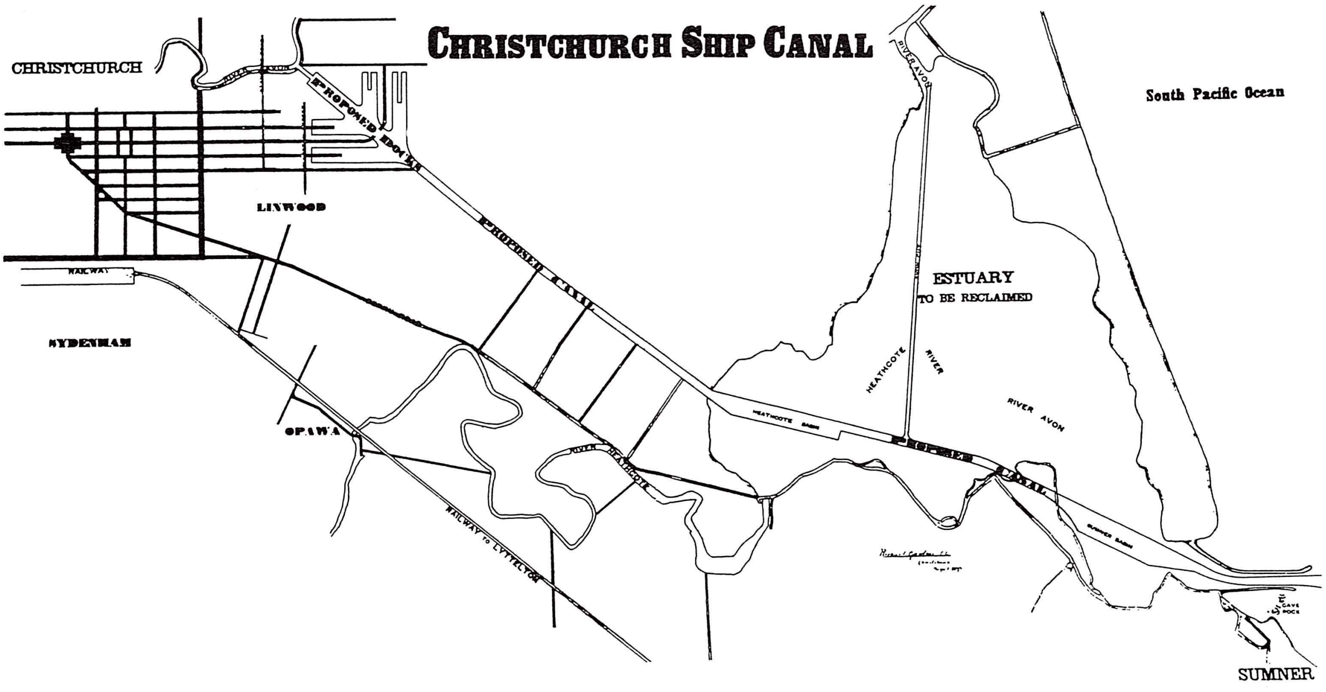
Four leaders of the Canal League gained seats on the Lyttelton Harbour Board at the elections in 1905. Although they did not have a majority on the Board, they were able to debate their case at great length. They were well known and greatly respected members of the community and, when debating their cause, were a formidable team. These men were: G W Russell, a Liberal leader and later a minister of the crown; H T J Thacker, later to become a mayor of Christchurch and a Member of Parliament; T E Taylor, M P, who established the New Zealand Electrical Construction Company to construct the electric tramway system in Christchurch, and later became Mayor of Christchurch, but died after only six weeks in office; and J L Scott, an engineer and a partner in Taylor's firm.

The four obtained seats on the Board's Canal Finance Committee, but were always outvoted by the remaining five members. The Finance Committee was given the task of costing the Heathcote canal and dock scheme and determining whether it could return a profit in a reasonable time, as well as providing savings to those who would use the facility.

Given the strength of divisive feelings on the matter it was perhaps a vain hope that the committee would be able to reach any agreement. As it turned out two separate reports were presented on August 4, 1909. The Railways Department's estimate of £86,000 earned on the Christchurch-Lyttelton railway per annum formed the basis of both reports. However, both factions produced estimates which were slanted to support their views.

Perhaps the most significant point to come out of both reports was the fact that, given the present rate of growth, the inner harbour of Lyttelton would be inadequate in a short time. On the other hand the proposed docks on the Heathcote would not cater for as much shipping as the present harbour. In addition, it was conceded that, without extensive dredging, the Heathcote docks and canal would not be able to accommodate the larger overseas liners which were now visiting New Zealand ports. Lyttelton would have to be retained for these larger vessels and for the docking facilities already established at the port. At best, the Heathcote docks would provide only a second-class tidal harbour.

Christchurch interests were disgusted at the findings contained in the reports but, despite three days of public meetings when the issues were debated time after time, the inevibable outcome could not be changed. The report, adopted by the Harbour Board, did not favour building the canal.



Three canal proposals, costing between £2,000,000 and £2,600,000 were considered. These provided for docks at the present–day Linwood City Shopping Centre, Lancaster Park and Heathcote Bridge.

This 1895 proposal involved the building of two moles at the Bar. The Avon and Heathcote rivers would become canals through a reclaimed Estuary. Their waters would be used to keep the lower reaches of the canal clear.

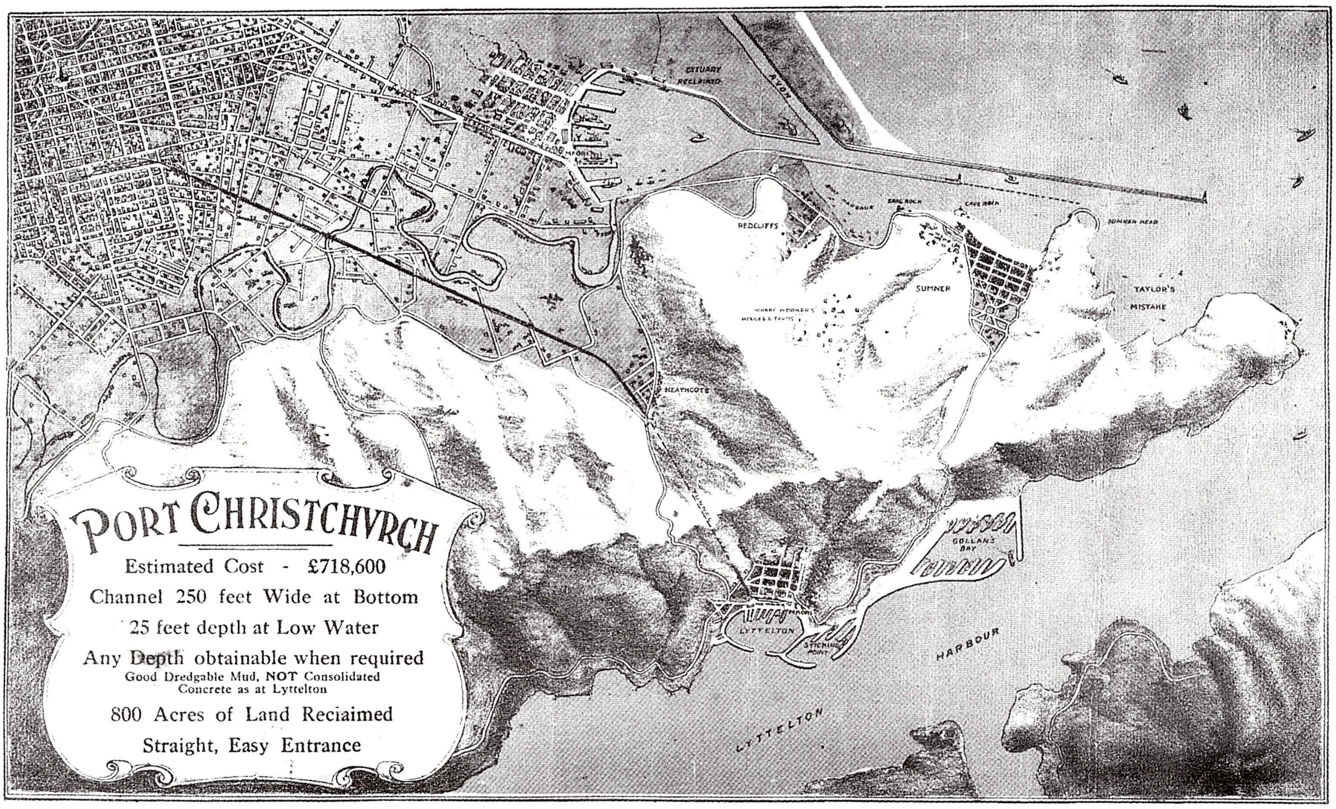
Source: Christchurch City Council Estuary Report.

Before his untimely death in 1911, Taylor managed to convince the Board that the commercial aspects of both schemes should be investigated by a Commission. The Commission's report, delivered in 1912, came out strongly in favour of retaining the port of Lyttelton. After considering evidence from mariners and engineers, the Commission concluded that it would be imprudent to replace a first-class natural harbour with an artificial one.

It is amusing to note just how involved members of the Commission became in the issue. Their fascination led them to investigate the practicality of using the old Canal Reserve along Linwood Avenue to give access to an alternative dock site at the corner of Buckleys Road and Linwood Avenue.

The Commissioners did however get to the nub of the matter when they realised that most of the agitation for a canal stemmed from a desire to break the monopoly which the Railways Department had on transport to and from Lyttelton. From the outset the Railways Department had complete control of the port working. The Railways Department argued that the building of the sorting sheds at Christchurch was not done to gain a monopoly but merely reflected the lack of suitable flat land at Lyttelton.[130]

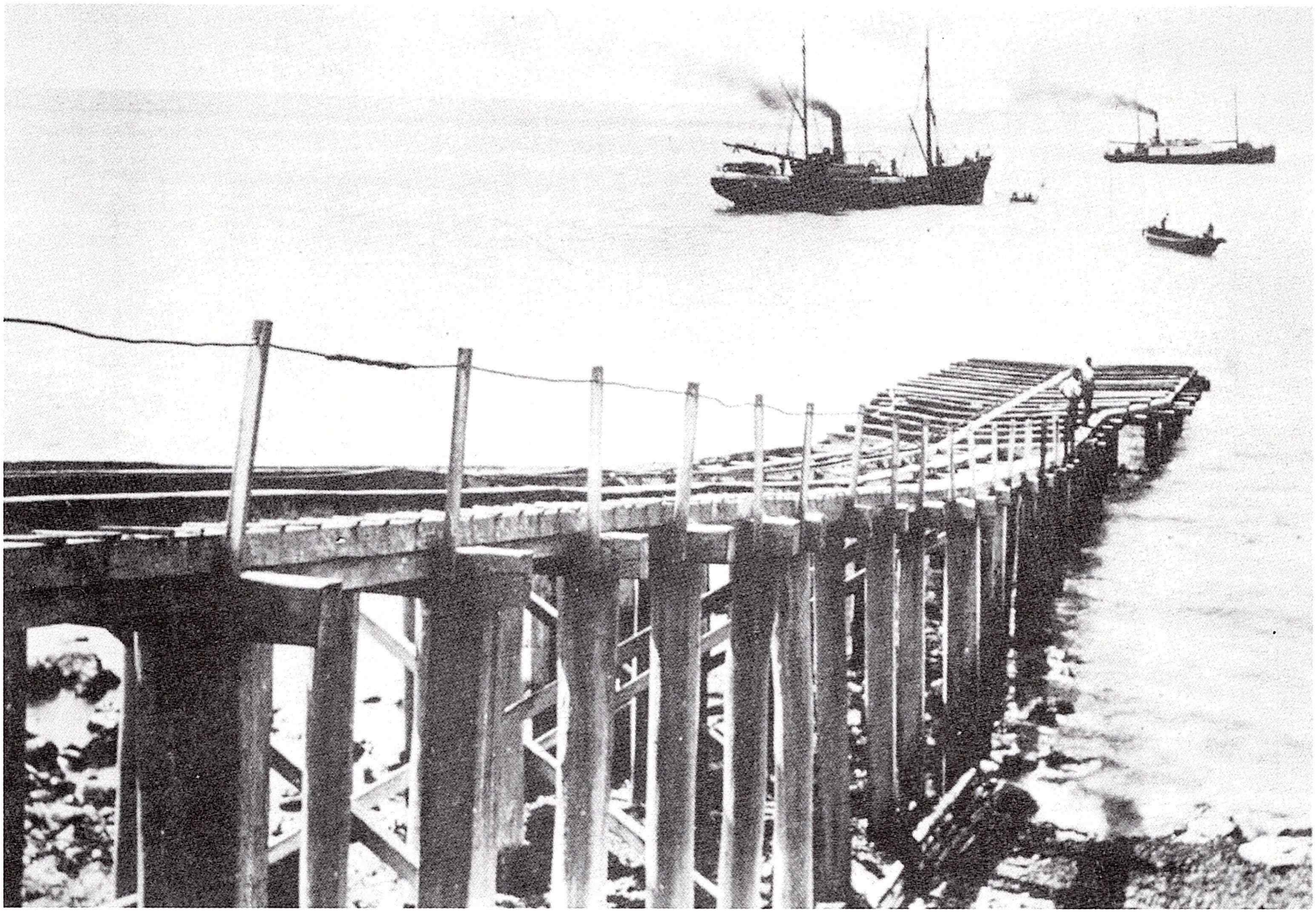
As it turned out there was not such a large increase in shipping as expected after 1909 and the port at Lyttelton proved adequate for many years. Even so, agitation for a canal simmered on for some time, gradually giving way to those wishing to see a road tunnel to Lyttelton. Public support for the tunnel project reached a climax in the 1930s but was delayed because of the Second World War.[131] Construction of the tunnel began in 1961 and the tunnel was opened in 1964.


PORT CHRISTCHVRCH
Estimated Cost - £718,600
Channel 250 feet Wide at Bottom
25 feet depth at Low Water
Any Depth obtainable when required
Good Dredgable Mud, NOT Consolidated Concrete as at Lyttelton
800 Acres of Land Reclaimed
Straight, Easy Entrance
ESTUARY RECLAIMED
AVON
REDCLIFFS
SUMNER
WHARF WORKERS' HOUSES & FARMS
TAYLOR'S MISTAKE
SUMNER HEAD
CAVE ROCK
HEATHCOTE
TUNNEL
GOLLAN'S BAY
LYTTELTON
MAORI
STICKING POINT
HARBOUR
LYTTELTON

Dr Thacker's port proposal, about 1912.

Source: Christchurch City Council Estuary Report.

North Canterbury ports



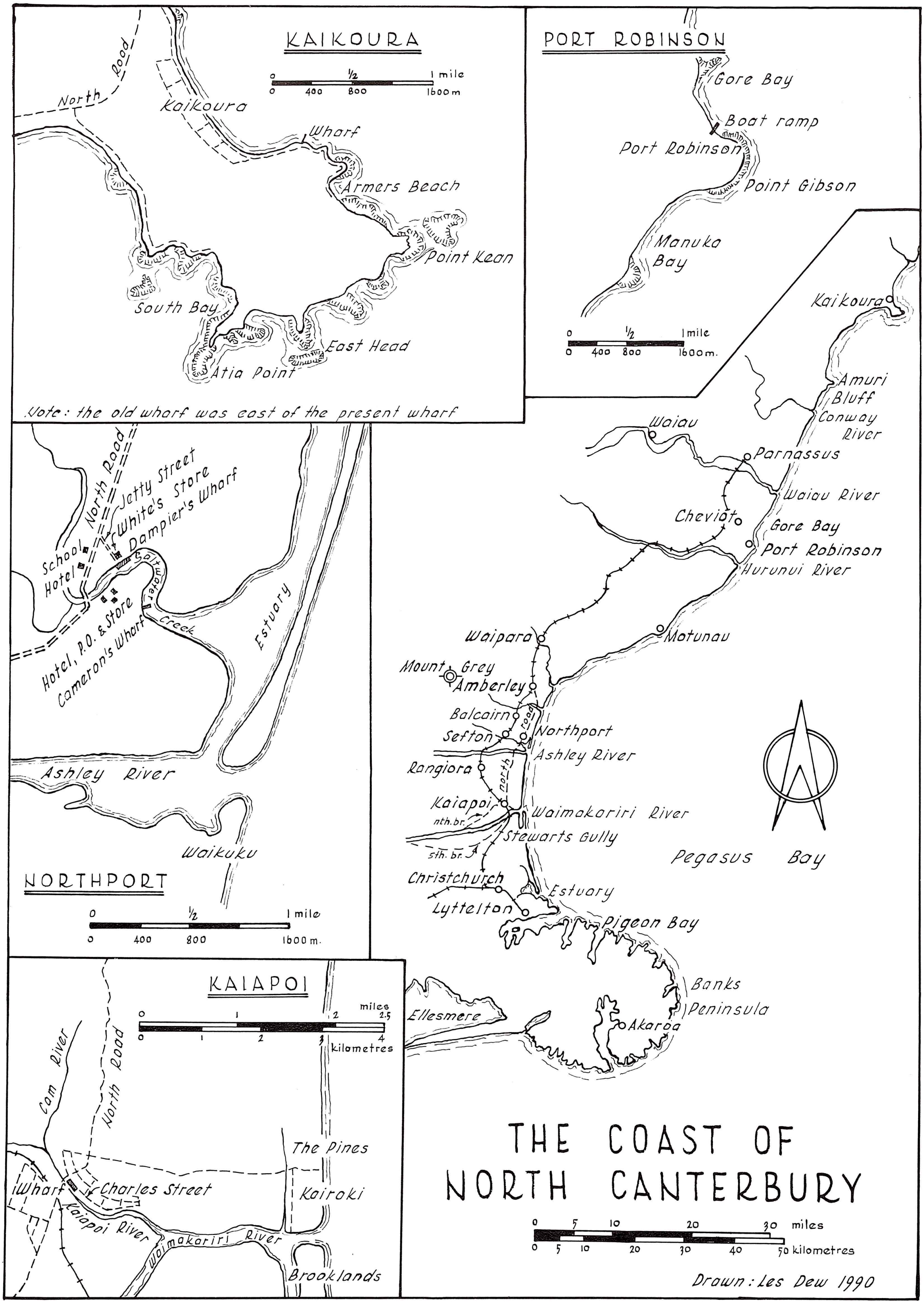
Typical of the unprotected landing places in North Canterbury is Port Robinson, at the south end of Gore Bay. Timber was landed here and farm produce from the nearby Cheviot Estate was shipped out. This photograph shows two steamers at anchor in open roadstead, in the bay while cargo is ferried out in rowing boats. In the foreground is the boat ramp where the rowing boats were run ashore. In the fickle weather along the Canterbury Coast, anchoring in this position was a dangerous practice. *Photograph: Alexander Turnbull Library.*

Northport, or Saltwater Creek

Just a short distance north of the Ashley River, State Highway One swings across the short bridge at Saltwater Creek. It is doubtful whether today's traveller pays much attention to this locality. A narrow, sluggish stream meanders between areas of salt marsh and only a few rotting piles give any hint of the port which served the district for some 10 years.

Before entering the sea, the course of Saltwater Creek is pushed in a southerly direction by a large bank of coastal sandhills, thus entering the wide estuary of the Ashley River. In 1849-50 Captain Thomas and Charles Torlesse investigated the estuary and the stream which flowed into it because they considered it may be required for shipping in the future.

The settlement at Saltwater Creek dated from mid-1856 when Henry Yates Miller had an accommodation house and stockyards erected where the Main North Road forded Saltwater Creek. Miller had been unsuccessful in his attempt to obtain a hotel licence at Rangiora, but had been assured by the authorities that a licence would be issued at Saltwater Creek on land set aside as a Ferry Reserve. He was required to operate a punt across the stream and soon his three-roomed house, known as "Halfway House", and the punt were well known to travellers on the road. Unfortunately, the charge of 1d. by day and 2d. at night was not sufficient to repay Miller's outlay and he was soon forced to sell to the Cameron brothers, who added a general store to the accommodation house.[132]


KAIKOURA
0 ½ 1 mile
0 400 800 1600 m
North Road
Kaikoura
Wharf
Armers Beach
Point Kean
South Bay
East Head
Atia Point
Note: the old wharf was east of the present wharf
PORT ROBINSON
Gore Bay
Boat ramp
Port Robinson
Point Gibson
Manuka Bay
0 ½ 1 mile
0 400 800 1600 m.
North Road
Jetty Street
White's Store
Dampier's Wharf
School
Hotel
Saltwater
Hotel, P.O. & Store
Cameron's Wharf
Creek
Estuary
Ashley River
Waikuku
NORTHPORT
0 ½ 1 mile
0 400 800 1600 m.
KAIAPOI
0 1 2 2.5 miles
0 1 2 3 4 kilometres
Cam River
North Road
The Pines
Wharf
Charles Street
Kairoki
Kaiapoi River
Waimakariri River
Brooklands
Kaikoura
Amuri Bluff
Conway River
Waiau
Parnassus
Waiau River
Cheviot
Gore Bay
Port Robinson
Hurunui River
Waipara
Motunau
Mount Grey
Amberley
Balcairn
north road
Sefton
Northport
Ashley River
Rangiora
north
Kaiapoi
nth. br.
Waimakariri River
Stewarts Gully
sth. br.
Christchurch
Estuary
Lyttelton
Pigeon Bay
Pegasus Bay
Banks Peninsula
Akaroa
Ellesmere
THE COAST OF NORTH CANTERBURY
0 5 10 20 30 miles
0 5 10 20 30 40 50 kilometres
Drawn: Les Dew 1990

In 1857 merchants and settlers began putting pressure on the Provincial Government to develop suitable ports for the coastal shipping services, then in their infancy.

The estuary of the Ashley received scant recognition because, when Charles Torlesse was sent to survey the entrance in 1857, he found only a foot of water over the bar at low tide. In his opinion it was unsuitable for even the smallest coastal ship. However, an advertisement in the "Lyttelton Times" in January 1858, stating that the ketch *Midlothian* would sail for Saltwater Creek with freight, "should the inducement be great enough", shows that some coastal trade had started. It is not recorded whether the voyage was made but it probably was, because a return cargo of North Canterbury wool would have been available for shipping.

The Ashley entrance and the channel were marked with beacons early in 1859, following an inspection by Captain Sproul, the Lyttelton harbour- master. Although unrecorded sailings may have taken place since the visit of the *Midlothian*, more regular use was made of Saltwater Creek by April 1859, when vessels sailed up to the ferry.

The bar across the Ashley entrance was shallow at low tide and prone to shift after floods, but once the masters had learned to negotiate it, they found that the reach inside was far superior to the Heathcote River, which, at that time, carried a large number of ships.

Today one wonders why ships and their crews braved such difficult conditions to provide a service over such short distances. It must be remembered however, that the roads of the time were little better than mud tracks. The journey from North Canterbury to Christchurch required fording many wide rivers, prone to violent flooding with little warning. What little road transport existed at the time consisted of waggons hauled by oxen or traction engines. On many occasions these waggons and their crews were forced to camp by a flooded river for up to a week waiting for the floods to subside before the journey could continue.

Dangerous as it was, navigating a vessel across a shallow bar was the lesser of the two evils, until the coming of the railway and later, the improvements to the roads.

The "Lyttelton Times" records the opening of the port at Saltwater Creek, on October 22, 1859 as follows:

"We learn that the navigation of the Saltwater Creek has been opened by the entrance of the cutter Industry*on Saturday last. This enterprising craft crossed the Ashley mouth with perfect ease and came up to Mr Dampier's wharf at "Northport", greatly surprised at the little difficulty which the river presented. We learn that the opening of the navigation was duly celebrated at Cameron's, in a manner recognised by all Englishmen, on Monday evening".*

This did not mean that Northport became a boom town over night. In fact, very few vessels used the port during the next few months.

Dampier, whose wharf had been used at the opening, had been a farmer at the Hurunui. In 1858 he came to Saltwater Creek and, finding that a large amount of land between the Main North Road and the north bank of the creek was available, he decided to purchase it. He subdivided this land thereby creating the township, which he named Northport. Land was set aside for a church and a school. A quay was established on the north bank of the creek with a market square nearby. Both had access from the Main North Road via Jetty Street. His house, "Northlands", stood at the junction of the Main North Road and Jetty Street, while close to the north side of the ford, he built his hotel, the "Northport".

Although Dampier's sections sold quickly, many of them left a lot to be desired. Purchasers, who had bought land only by viewing it on a map in Christchurch, found to their dismay when they came to occupy the land, that they were now the owner of a useless sandhill or a stretch of mud flats. In one case the hapless owner found that his land was under water.

Cameron also built a wharf and woolshed on his side of the creek, reached by a side road passing in front of his hotel. Between them, Dampier's and Cameron's facilities were to handle all the freight at Saltwater Creek.

The Provincial Government was most unhappy that a town was becoming established at Saltwater Creek. The Government had planned a town three miles further up the creek at Sefton. Even as the Saltwater Creek port was opening for trade, the Government was considering a report from Edward Dobson who recommended clearing and dredging the stream up to Sefton so that vessels of up to twenty tons could serve the town. Although the Government did not proceed with this scheme it was most reluctant to agree to a bridge at the Main North Road as this might interfere with the future use of the river. They even considered re-routing the main road through Sefton.

By 1860 a handful of squatters had divided all the land north of Waipara into large sheep stations varying in size between 25,000 and 120,000 acres. Some wool from this vast area was shipped out from Motunau and Port Robinson. There were no port facilities at either of these places and ships had to stand out to sea while the wool bales were brought out through the surf in open whaleboats. As this dangerous practice made the crossing of the Ashley Bar seem a simple exercise, it is little wonder that most of the North Canterbury wool clip was shipped from Saltwater Creek. For ten years Dampier and the Cameron brothers found themselves sitting astride an important trade route.

The arrival of the steamer *Avon*, on November 7, 1860, marked the beginning of a regular shipping service to Saltwater Creek. Because it was more than a year since the opening of the port, this event was seen as an excuse for a second port-opening ceremony, which was celebrated in a most convivial manner. On this occasion Dampier was host to local settlers and the merchants of Christchurch and Lyttelton.

During its lifetime the chief export from Saltwater Creek was wool, which could be shipped to the overseas ships at Lyttelton far more easily than taking it by road.

The township of Northport continued to grow and, by 1862, could boast several businesses, including a blacksmith, butcher, doctor, wheelwright and several carpenters and builders. The town also had a post office. The hotels became popular amongst the teamsters who had hauled the wool for many a long dusty mile to the port. A great place for slaking a mighty thirst, the hotels were the scene of many a boisterous party.

The Government decided not to carry out any work on dredging the river up to Sefton. It was convinced that the port of Kaiapoi could handle all the North Canterbury freight. As a consequence – was it perhaps spite?– the Government refused to have anything to do with Saltwater Creek. Any improvements had to be carried out by local folk at their own expense. To help ships' crews the Cameron brothers staked the channel and rowed their dingy through the surf to guide incoming vessels over the bar and up the channel to the port.

The Provincial Government did have its conscience pricked in October 1863, when the *Gypsy* sank after hitting an obstruction inside the Bar. The Government gave the Camerons a whaleboat to assist in their piloting service and a grant of £50 to help clear the creek. The problem was that the port was busy during the wool season and saw very little use during the winter months. It was the winter floods which caused the Bar to change so that by the start of the next wool season, ships' crews had no idea of what to expect when entering the estuary.

In 1862, for example, the master of the steamer *Gazelle* found it prudent to anchor his ship out at sea while he inspected the entrance by rowing the ship's boat through the breakers on the Bar. Having assured himself of a safe passage he was still not prepared to take any chances. He had a seaman stationed in the bows, probing with a pole to locate any hidden shoals while he steamed very slowly across the Bar.

Trees carried down in the winter floods also caused hazards to shipping and the start of each wool season saw a regular clearance of the channel. Permanent works to make the creek safer were not satisfactory. In 1865, a £300 breakwater was washed away less than a year after it was erected.

The early settlers were proud of their port and confident of its future. In 1862 they formed the Saltwater Creek and Kaiapoi Coasting Steam Navigation Company Ltd, with its head office at Northport. They raised £10,000 and ordered a 48 ton twin screw-steamer from Harland and Wolff of Belfast, Ireland. With this ship, *Waipara* they hoped to operate a direct service between the sawmills of Banks Peninsula and the farmers of North Canterbury. They also wished to serve the bar-bound rivers and to develop trade between Saltwater Creek, Kaiapoi and other New Zealand ports. They planned to purchase further ships as trade expanded.

On October 15, 1864 the *Waipara* made her maiden voyage to her home port. In just three hours and forty minutes she covered the distance from Peacock's Jetty at Lyttelton to the mouth of the Ashley. The township was decked with bunting and flags, and crowds took up good vantage points along the creek and in the sandhills, to watch this historic occasion. Collectively, the crowd held its breath as the steamer crossed the Bar. The cheering was deafening once she was safely inside the estuary. Moored alongside Cameron's wharf, she drew a large crowd as her steam winches loaded a cargo for Lyttelton.

Although the *Waipara* was a successful ship she was unable to cross the Bar with any regularity. She was eventually altered and transferred to the West Coast.

The 50 ton steamer *Moa* was found to be the best steamer for the run and became the most regular caller at the creek. She was a lucky ship and, despite several lucky escapes, managed to keep up a regular service. On one occasion, while carrying a cargo of sheep for Glenmark, she ran aground in Saltwater Creek and arrived at Northport in a damaged condition. Temporary repairs were carried out to enable her to sail back to Lyttelton for a complete overhaul.

During the 10 year history of the port, and considering the tonnage of cargo involved, the shipping service proved very satisfactory. Upwards of 2,000 bales of wool were shipped through the port each year. In the summer of 1868-9, just a year before work began on the railway, the wool clip had grown to 5,000 bales. In addition, grain and building stone were shipped from the port. Incoming cargo amounted to some 500 tons annually. This consisted mainly of farming supplies and was not subject to the same seasonal fluctuations as the outward cargo. The principal commodities to come in through the port were coal, timber and fencing wire. There were several cases of vessels being stranded on the Bar but, fortunately, most were towed off at high tide to resume their tasks.

It is indeed strange that the only serious mishaps occurred within a few months of each other. In December 1864, the ketch *Mary and Elizabeth* sank immediately upon striking the south spit at the entrance to the Ashley. She was carrying a cargo of timber from Akaroa at the time.

Just two months later, in February 1865, the brig *Thames* was caught in breakers and was unable to reach the entrance. She was carrying a load of telegraph poles collected from the sawmills of Banks Peninsula and intending to drop them off along the North Canterbury coast for the erection of the telegraph line to Nelson.

The schooner *Nymph of the Seas* set out to offer assistance and to attempt to tow the stricken vessel off the beach. In the fickle conditions at the time the *Nymph of the Seas* was also driven ashore and met the same fate as the *Thames*.

River ports have never been entirely satisfactory. In the 10 years when Northport was in use the Bar at the Ashley mouth moved steadily southwards. This made the entry into Saltwater Creek increasingly difficult. Northport suffered a major setback in the flood of February 4, 1868, when Saltwater Creek was filled with silt, fallen trees, dead animals and other debris. The township took a battering also, and several sod houses were washed away. Some of the timber buildings which stood in the path of the flood were washed out to sea.

This was enough for many of the inhabitants of Northport, who packed up what little they had left and moved to a more suitable town. Those who remained rebuilt their houses and businesses and reopened the port. A flax mill, which processed local flax was built nearby.

The Ashley estuary deteriorated further and by 1870 navigation had become more difficult. This led to an unreliable shipping service and many local farmers preferred to send their produce out through the more reliable port at Kaiapoi.

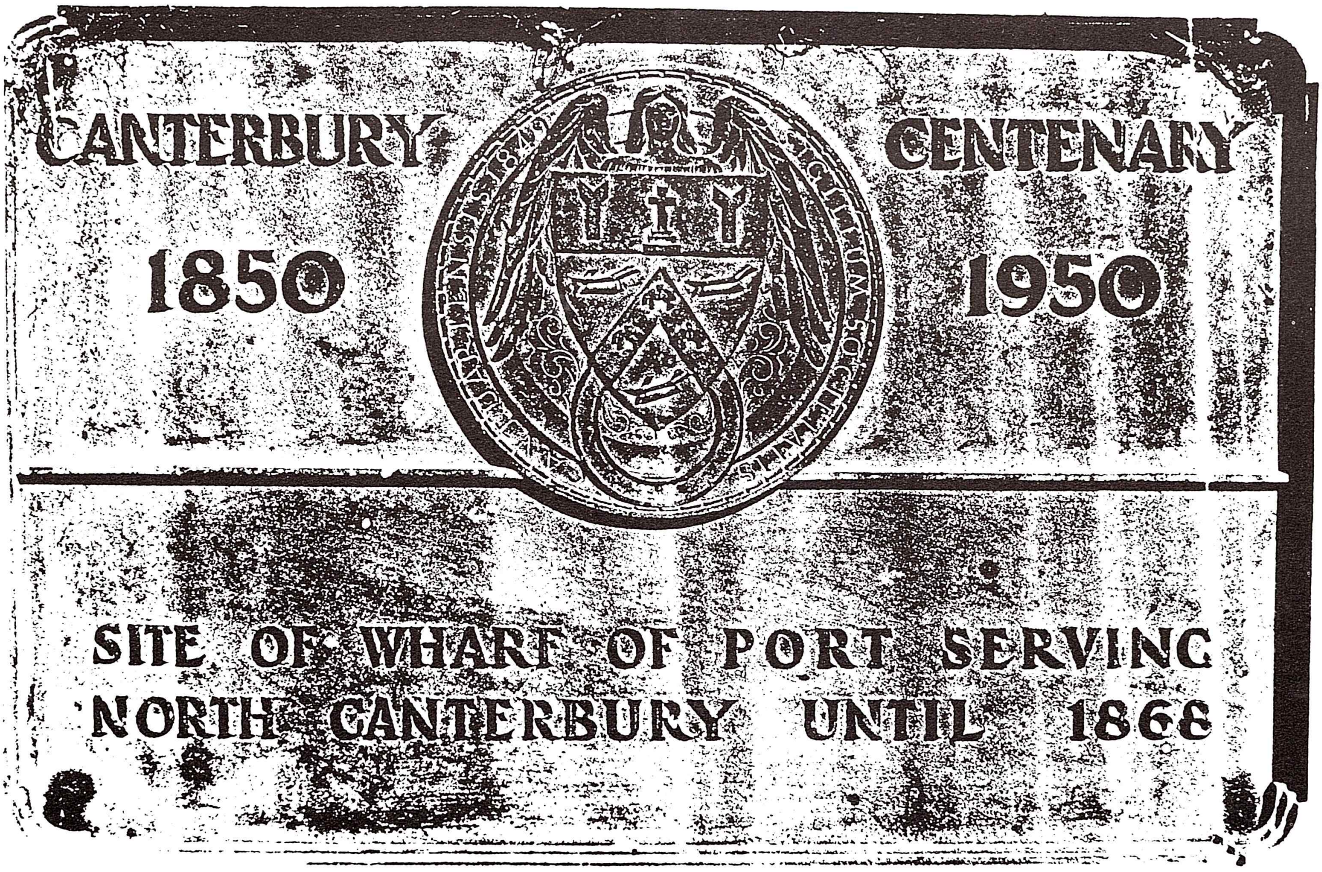
By 1872 the railway had reached Rangiora and was being extended northwards. Although the line was located much further inland than first planned, it provided a reliable transport service for North Canterbury.[133]

It was impossible for Northport to compete with the railway. As a result, the port fell into disuse and many of the remaining settlers moved away.

As you cross the Saltwater Creek Bridge, spare a thought for the hardy pioneers and the daring seamen who developed this locality to provide the North Canterbury farmers with a transport service that was to survive until overtaken by modern technology.

Right: The placid waters of Saltwater Creek belie the fact that this was once the bustling port of Northport, and for a decade, served all the transport needs of the North Canterbury settlers.

Photograph: Les Dew (1989).

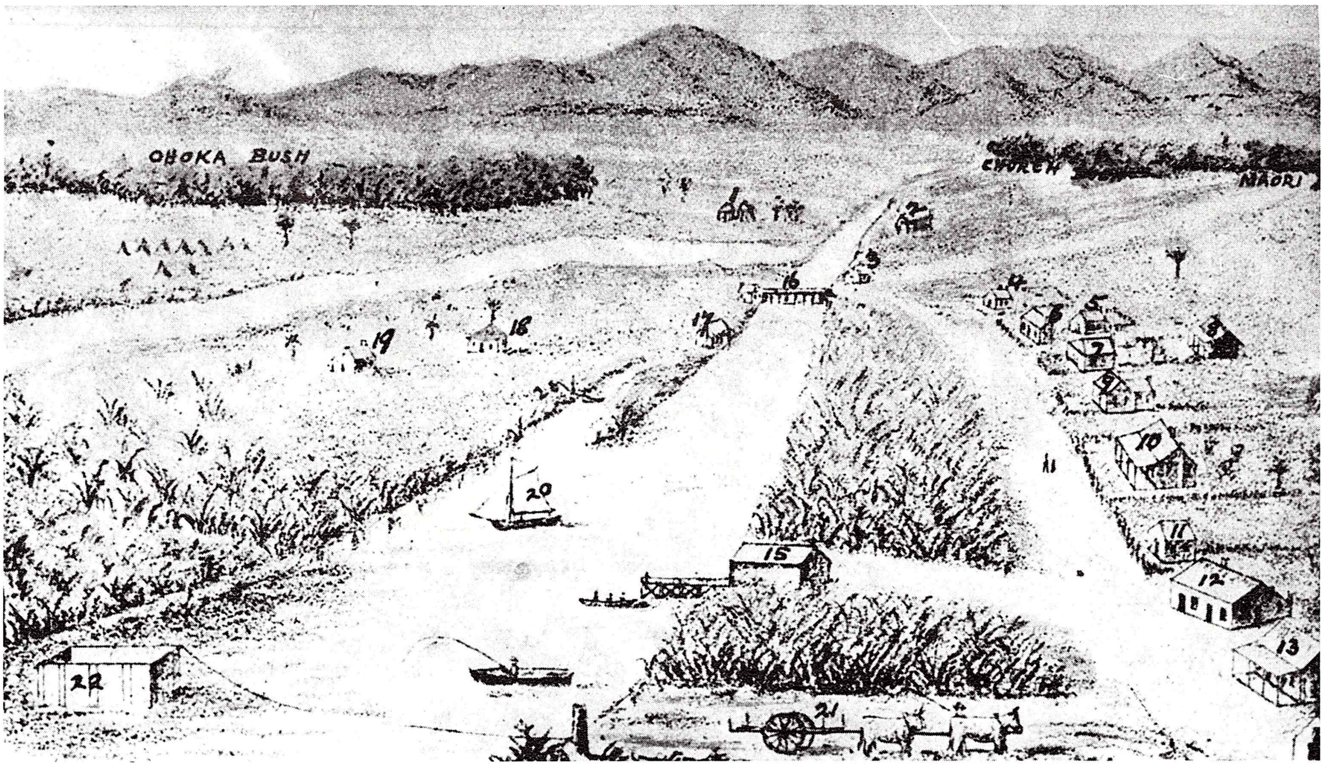


This plaque on the Saltwater Creek Bridge commemorates the early importance of Northport.

the port of Kaiapoi

When Captain John Lort Stokes of the *Acheron* [described in the section "Explorers, Surveyors and Mariners"] visited the Maori people at Kaiapoi, he found a busy thriving community. Fishing, agriculture and flax growing appeared to be the chief work carried on. The Maoris had occupied this site and the surrounding country for some time. Some trading had taken place with the crews of early traders and whalers, who required fresh potatoes and supplies of flax. Navigation of the Waimakariri River had so far proved unsuccessful so the produce had to be carried overland to the ships waiting at Lyttelton.

Following the settlement of Canterbury in 1850, farmers started taking up land in North Canterbury. Prior to 1851 a cutter would make an occasional trip up the north branch of the Waimakariri River to deliver survey gear and supplies. Kaiapoi was considered to be the hub of the North Canterbury development and the need for a port in the Waimakariri was soon recognised. After making one or two exploratory trips up the river in his vessel the *Flirt*, George Day of Sumner began a regular monthly service between Heathcote and Kaiapoi in 1852.



Kaiapoi in 1859. An old sketch of the township showing (1) Revell's house; (2) Normans' house; (3) Jones' house; (4) Anderson's house; (5) Anderson's smithy; (6) Sim's stables; (7) Northern Hotel; (8) house; (9) Perrin's shop; (10) White's Beehive Store; (11) Mrs Dale's shop; (12) Black's store; (13) Day's Kaiapoi Hotel; (14) Weston's store; (15) Black's woolstore and wharf; (16) White's first bridge; (17) Post Office; (18) Baker's house; (19) Stanton's house; (20) timber boat; (21) Packwood's bullock team; (22) Baxter's punt. *Courtesy Canterbury Museum.*

Two wool stores were built at Kaiapoi in 1853. Until the first wharf was built the following year, the wool had to be loaded from the river bank.

The use of river ports in North Canterbury became a hotly debated issue. Many people claimed that the whole of the coastline, with its bar-bound rivers, was a great danger. However, several experienced mariners considered that the rivers could be used safely by sound vessels. It was not the merits of this debate which swayed the provincial authorities, though. The condition of the road between Christchurch and Kaiapoi was in such a shocking state that sea transport became a necessity. When J E Thacker's *Alma* made its first voyage to Kaiapoi on December 14, 1855, the Canterbury Steam Navigation Company looked forward to a regular shipping service. But this was not to be, as the *Alma* was lost on the Sumner Bar a month later.

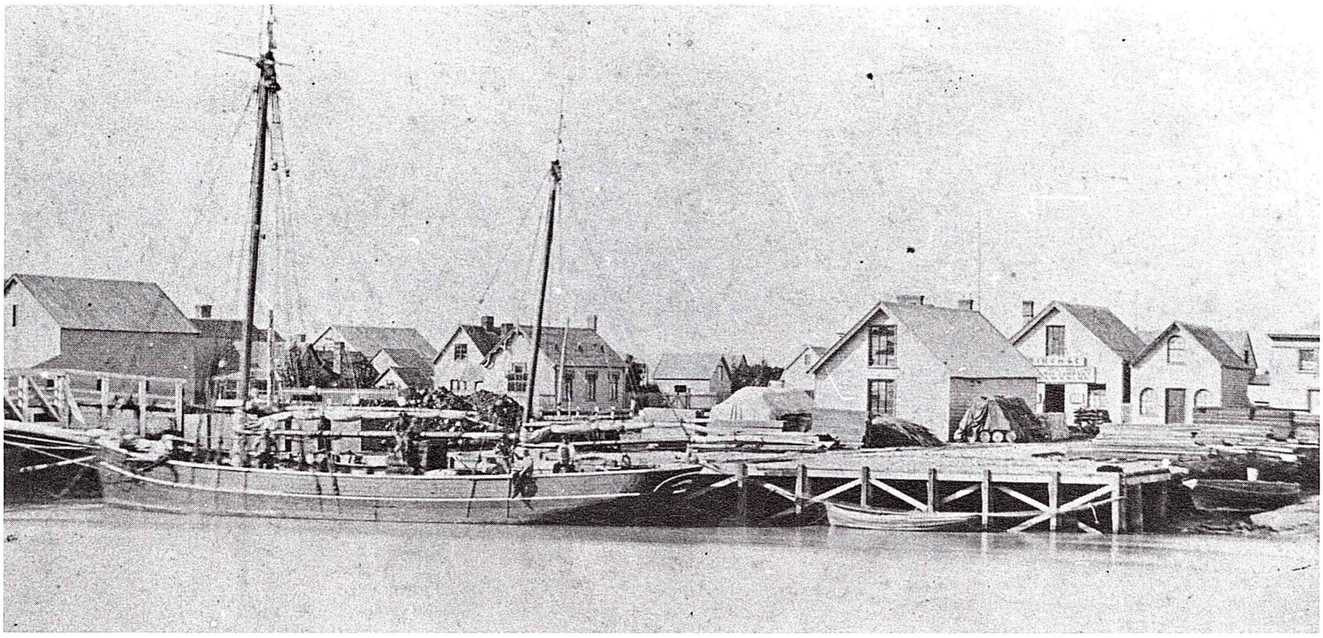
In 1857 Charles Torlesse made a thorough survey of the Waimakariri. The Bar was covered by 11 feet of water at high tide but the river mouth, 100 yards wide, was liable to shift as much as a quarter of a mile north or south of its normal course. The first navigational aids, erected in 1857, consisted of two baskets slung from tall poles. They were erected on the sand hills behind the entrance to the river. In theory, when the two baskets appeared in line to an incoming captain his vessel was in line to take the bar. In practice, however, the Bar shifted to such an extent that most captains preferred to trust their own judgement. They would stand off the entrance until the wind and tide were right and run over the Bar with the sea dead astern.

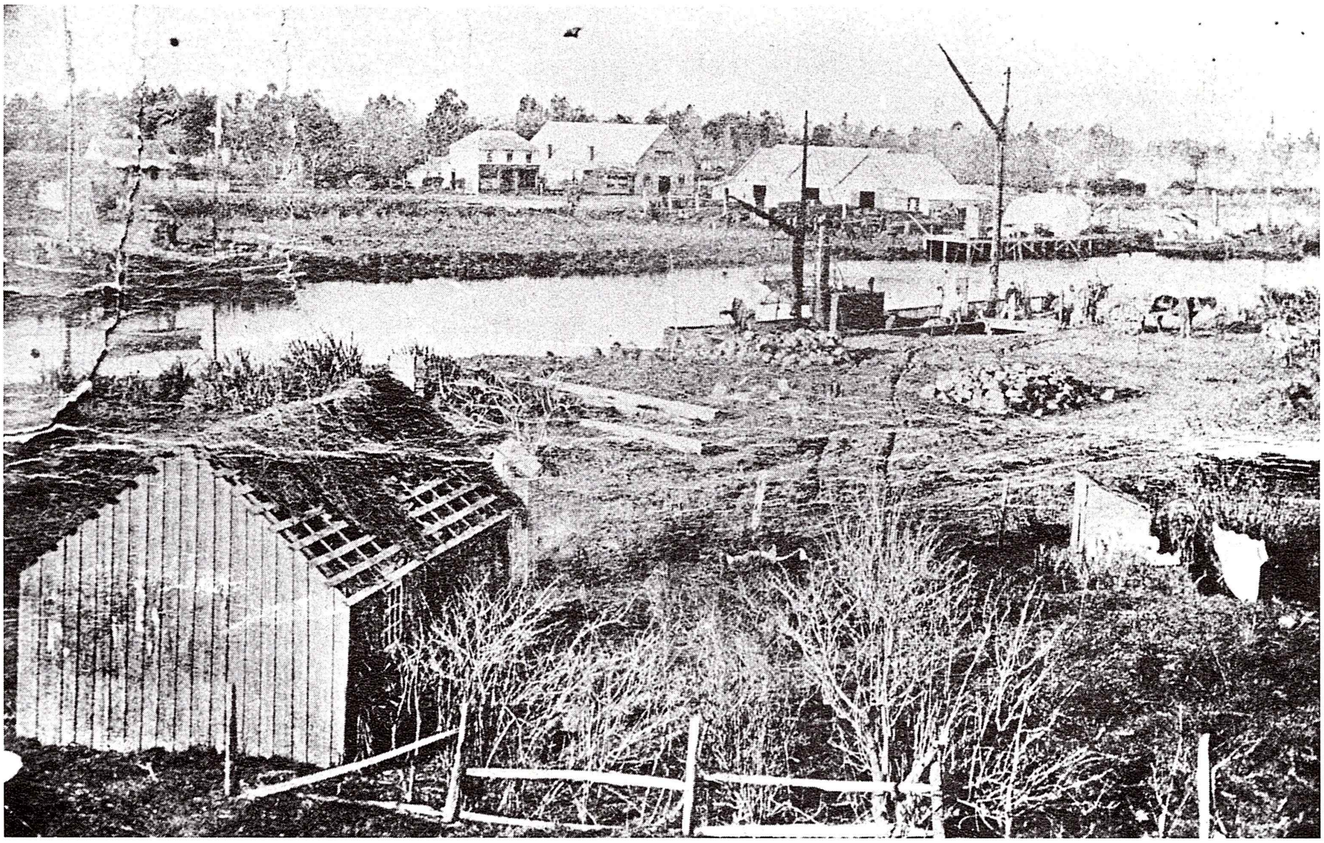
Because of accidents, an insurance scheme was established by which ports and merchants had to pay a premium. Payments were shared by Kaiapoi, £1,000, and Motunau, £500. This system was honoured by the Government and without payment steamers would not call.

The 45 ton steamer *Planet* made her maiden voyage to Kaiapoi on March 9, 1858, just in time for the bulk of the wool season. Her departure from Lyttelton had been delayed for a day because the tides on the Bar would not have been suitable when she arrived. When she did sail at 8.00am she had a considerable number of passengers. Most were on a pleasure trip but some immigrants, who had just arrived on the *Roehampton*, found this a convenient way to travel to their new homes. Strong winds, rain and fog made navigation difficult but in four hours she had tied up at Fraser's wharf in Kaiapoi without any incidents, piloted over the Bar by Mr Tregear, formerly of the *Flirt*.

She was ready to sail next morning fully loaded with 68 bales of wool but 14 bales had to be off-loaded to make room for the large number of passengers who wished to embark. The weather was still bad and the *Planet* bumped on the sea bottom a few times when crossing the Bar, half an hour after leaving Kaiapoi. No serious damage was done however and she reached Lyttelton in four hours. That same day her cargo of wool was loaded onto the *Glentanner* for shipment overseas. Although the cargoes on these small vessels could be worked fairly quickly, they still had to spend 12 hours in the river to catch favourable tides for each Bar crossing.

Another regular caller at the port was the 26 ton schooner *Uira*, which became the first vessel to do a round sailing from Lyttelton to Kaiapoi and back in the daylight hours with a full cargo both ways. The *Uira* also ran cargo services from Kaiapoi to Wellington and could complete the Kaiapoi-Wellington-Lyttelton circuit in six days. Unfortunately she met the same

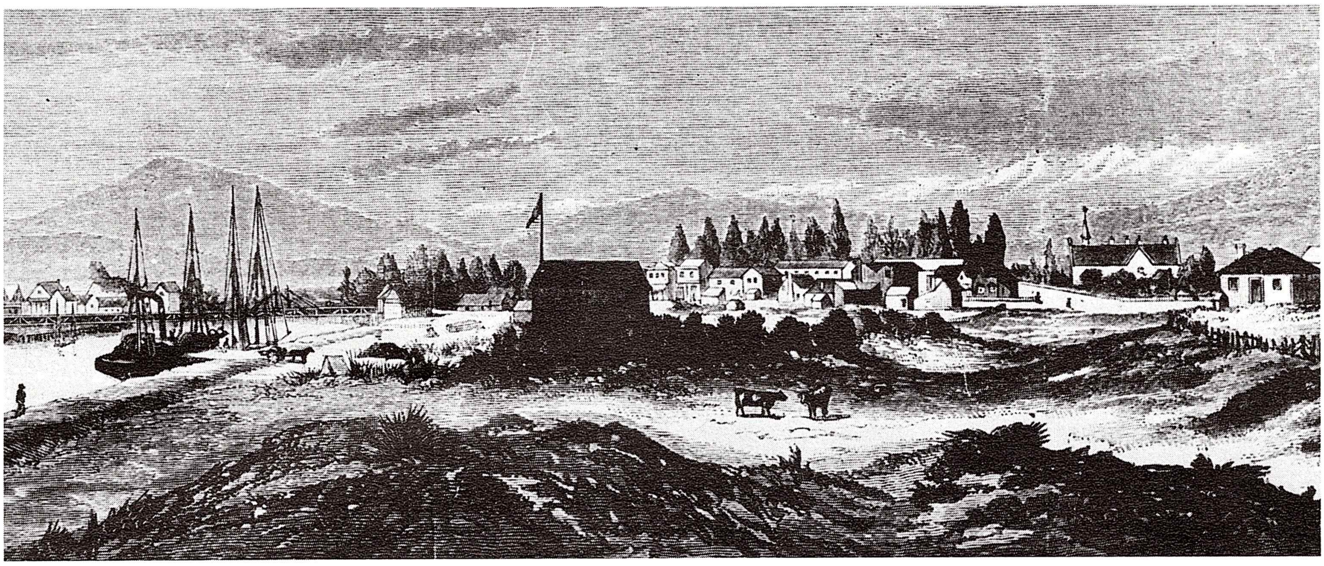




Early, undated, shipping scenes at Kaiapoi. *Photographs: Canterbury Museum.*

fate as many of the early coastal ships of the time. On March 22, 1863, she capsized off the Akaroa Heads and was not seen again.[134]

The town, laid out by surveyors Cass, Davie and Boys in 1855, soon developed on both banks of the north branch of the Waimakariri. Stores, stables, blacksmiths and hotels were soon established. With development on both sides of the river, a ferry became a necessity and was established by Baxter in 1853. This soon outlived its usefulness and was replaced by a bridge, built by William White, and opened on May 31, 1858. To allow ships to pass upstream the bridge was designed to swing in the middle. It stood some 200 yards above Baxter's Ferry. As payment for the bridge, White was allowed to collect the bridge tolls for seven years. These were: 3d. for horses, cattle and passengers, vehicles 9d., ten bullocks and a dray 3/–, sheep, pigs and goats, $^1/_2$d. per head for the first 100 then $^1/_4$d. per head thereafter.



Kaiapoi in 1878, an engraving which appeared in the "Illustrated Press". *Courtesy Canterbury Museum.*

About the same time, industries in the form of flax and flour mills, became established, although some were short-lived.

The timber industry was a case in point. With a ready market in Christchruch for timber, the area was soon the scene of wholesale logging. Much of this timber came from the Maori Reserve at the outskirts of the town. Originally, the hand-sawn timber was carted to Christchurch on bullock waggons. Ferrying these waggons over both branches of the Waimakariri River made this a most laborious task and it was soon found to be easier to carry the timber down the river on rafts and punts to a point near the present day settlement of Stewarts Gully, where it could be loaded onto waggons. There was soon a large fleet of punts on the river operated by six owners. In 1859, however, a large fire swept through the bush on the Maori Reserve and the timber industry in this district came to an untimely end.[135]

At the height of the sawmilling boom in 1859, 200,000 feet of timber, 3,000 piles, 15,000 posts and rails and 1,500 cords of firewood were ferried across the Waimakariri River bound for Christchurch, in just nine months. Further timber from the sawmills was also used locally or shipped out to other settlements. Although some sawmilling was carried out in the next few years it was never again a significant industry in the town. Many sawyers, finding themselves unemployed, left the district for the gold diggings of Otago.

The Port of Kaiapoi developed cautiously until it could be seen whether the new port at Saltwater Creek would take the trade from the North Canterbury farms at the expense of Kaiapoi.

In May 1861 the paddle-steamer *Lyttelton* began regular trading between Kaiapoi and Wellington, calling at Amuri on the way. She also made trips to Otago taking food for the gold miners. With the establishment of the port of Kaiapoi came a small fleet of ketches, cutters and schooners, providing a regular service from Kaiapoi to Lyttelton. Perhaps the best known steamers were the *Mullogh* and the *Avon*. Another regular caller, which ran from the Heathcote and Peninsula bays, was the 42 ton paddle- steamer *Tongariro*, with cargo for Benjamin Monck, a coal and firewood merchant of Kaiapoi.

At first, the chief cargo was wool and the trade tended to be seasonal. Soon, however, with smaller farms being established, other cargoes were lifted, thus extending the season. In 1861 it was estimated that £53,400 worth of cargo was shipped out from Kaiapoi. The cargoes consisted of 1,830 bales of wool, 200 tons of flour, 100 tons of hides and tallow and 10,000 bushels of grain. This was quite a spectacular achievement, given that the small vessels of the day could only handle about 50 bales of wool at one time. At the lower end of the scale were vessels like the *Ebenezer* (10 tons) which could barely manage 20 bales.[136]

At the height of the season up to 26 vessels could be seen in the river at one time. Although most of these were taking on cargoes for other ports in New Zealand, it is recorded that occasionally one would sail direct to Sydney with oats and other farm produce. Drays and bullock waggons, bringing produce to the wharf, would be lined up from the Kaiapoi Shipping Office for a considerable distance down Charles Street.[137]

During the 1860s more than 80 small ships and steamers were engaged in the Lyttelton-Kaiapoi trade. Most of these were owned by their captains or else the captain had a financial share in them. This stimulated great rivalry to be the first vessel into port to lift a particular cargo.

An annual ceremony at the Kaiapoi Wharf marked the loading of the season's first wool bale, and there was always a keen race to be first up the river to receive the honour. The first bale was hoisted to the masthead of the winning vessel while the sailors and townsfolk toasted the success of the coming season's wool clip.

The 29 ton ketch *Maid of the Mill* won the race four years in a row. She usually completed the Lyttelton-Kaiapoi journey in three or four hours, and on one occasion, set the record of two and a half hours.

By 1871 the value of goods shipped through Kaiapoi had increased to £147,000.[138]

Kaiapoi's first harbour-master, a Swede named John Petersen, was appointed in 1866. He lived in a hut near the mouth of the river and, as well as piloting ships, he was required to tend to the movable beacons on the Bar and stake the channel up to Kaiapoi. The shifting channels in the river seemed to take just as heavy a toll on shipping as the Bar.

Captains and owners preferred short runs, such as the one from Lyttelton to Kaiapoi, although the number of ships seeking the cargo meant that the returns were usually modest. The rate for wool was 6/– a bale and general cargo was charged at 15/– to 20/– a ton. Captains vying for cargo would sneak out of Lyttelton in an attempt to be first to reach Kaiapoi. These tactics seldom went unnoticed however and the vessel would soon be hotly pursued by rival captains in a race across Pegasus Bay.

The crews of these small ships usually numbered two. During the dangerous crossing of the Bar, they would be extremely busy with the captain working the tiller and the mainsail while the apprentice handled the jib and the foresail. An unladen ship could cross at low water with four feet of water covering the Bar but a laden ship would have to wait for high tide when the depth of water varied from 10 to 12 feet. One mistake could prove costly. When the *Emerald* went ashore on the Bar it cost her captain all his profits from the previous year to have his vessel dragged clear and repaired.

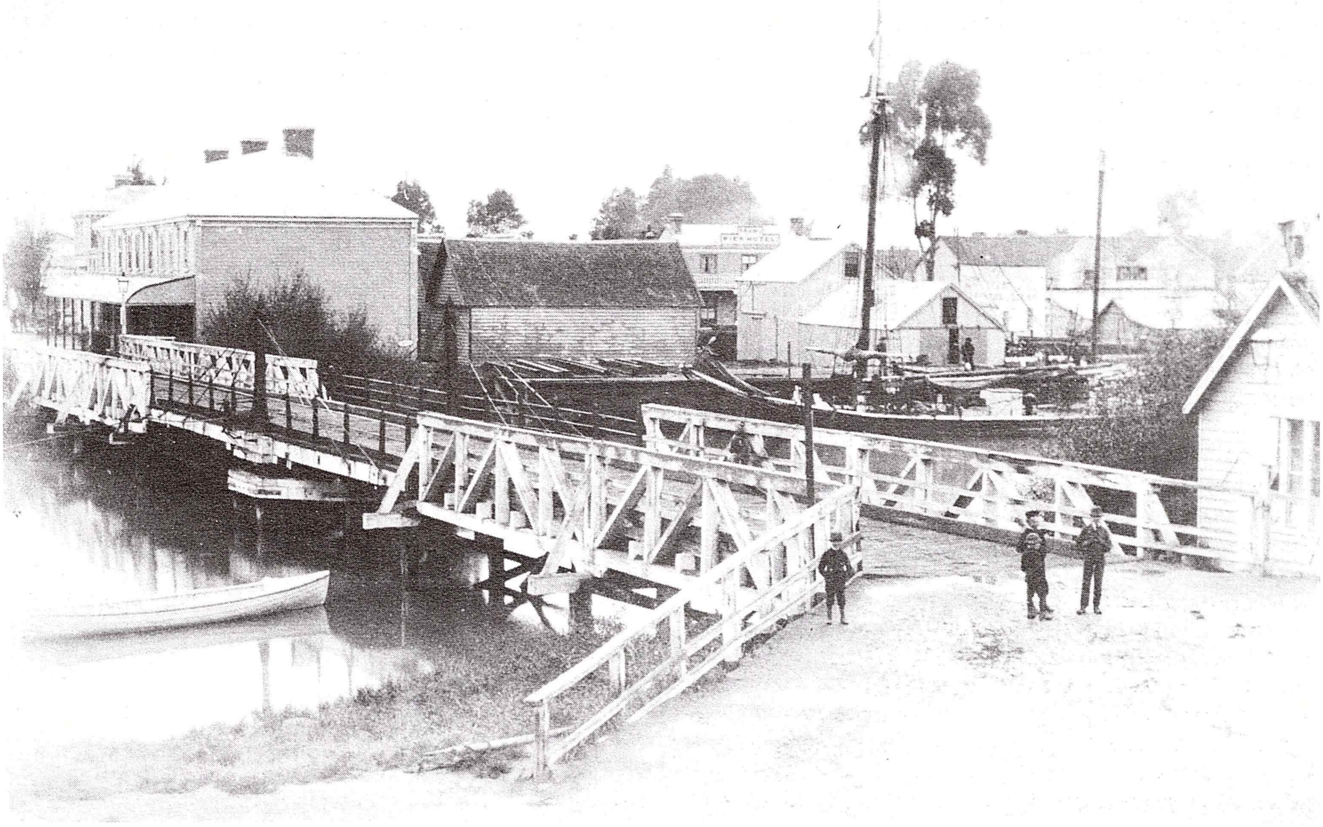
There were many strandings on the Bar and in the river, but fortunately most vessels were refloated and there was little loss of life. The dubious distinction of being the first wreck on the Bar went to the *Thetis*, on December 18, 1865. Within a year she was followed by the 17 ton cutter *Iris* which went aground in August 1866 and was a complete loss. Within a few months, several more vessels had joined the list of wrecks. In some cases the cargoes were able to be salvaged but this was not always possible. Steamers would often help by towing sailing vessels through the rough water on the Bar.

During the off-season the captains were faced with the choice of having their vessels laid-up or seeking cargoes over longer distances. This often required sailing to places for which the ships were unsuitable and many were wrecked as a consequence. The *Maid of the Mill* was a case in point. It was wrecked at Hokitika on June 10, 1866.

Faced with these losses, the merchants of Kaiapoi put increasing pressure on the Provincial Government to carry out improvements to the port, mainly by dredging. The Provincial Government was reluctant to spend any money on this work, however, as it could see the day in the not-too-distant future when the railway to North Canterbury would be constructed and the need for this port would disappear.[139]

It seems that the Government did not consider the trade important enough or the port permanent enough to justify such expenditure.

Captains also had to be aware of two man-made obstacles in the river. One was the telegraph wires spanning the river. Several vessels had their masts entangled in the wires and it became the practice to send a man aloft to deal with the wires. The other problem was the Main Road bridge. It was designed as a swing bridge to open and allow vessels to pass up river. Captains wishing to go up beyond the bridge were required to



An early view of the port of Kaiapoi. The bridge remained in use until part of it was washed away in the floods of February 4, 1868. It was restored in 1869. From its opening it had been a toll bridge, but the tolls were abolished in 1874.

Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

signal the bridge-keeper by means of a flag or a bell. On some occasions the captain did not give sufficient notice or the current carried the vessel upstream faster than anticipated, with the result that the vessel collided with the bridge before it was completely opened. The bridge was repaired in 1893 and, as there was no call for vessels to go upstream, the opening mechanism was removed.

After two vessels were wrecked on the Bar in 1870, one resulting in the loss of two lives, the authorities of Lyttelton placed a semaphore staff on the sand-hills south of the entrance. In 1871 George Day was appointed signalman and pilot for the Kaiapoi River, a job he held for many years. George Day's father, also named George Day was the master of the *Flirt*, and his contribution to the development of the Canterbury settlement has been told in an earlier chapter.

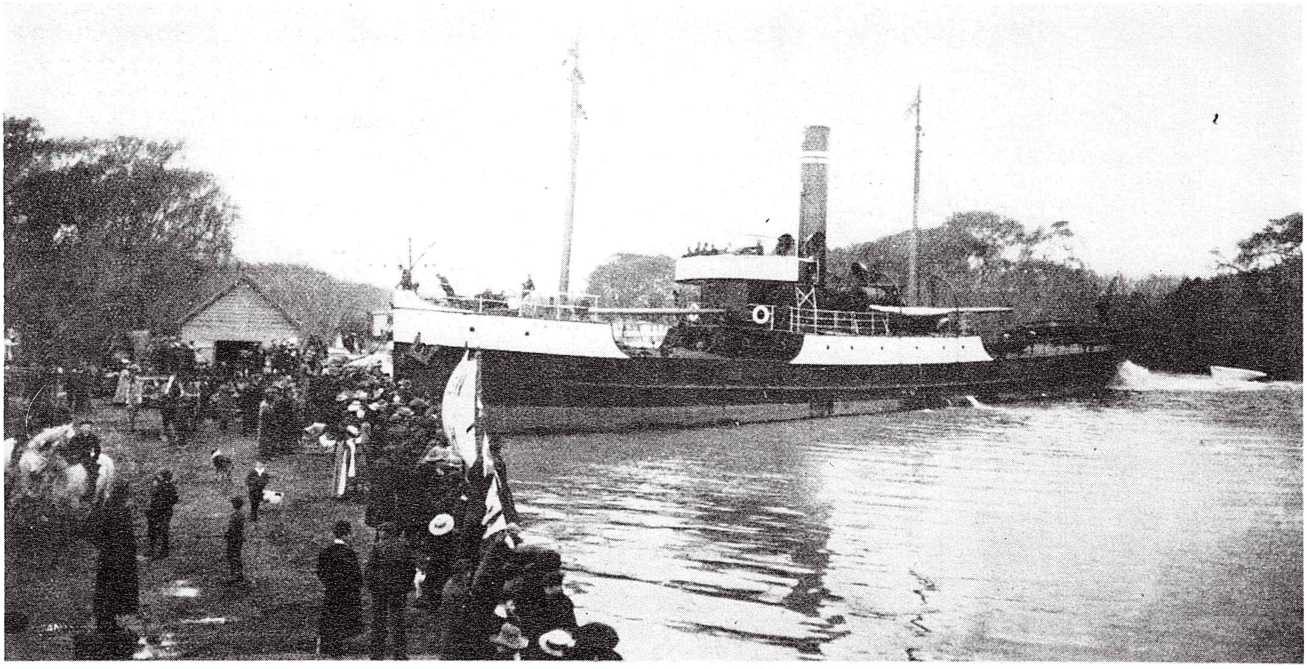
The early 1870s were years of indecision for the folk of Kaiapoi. On the one hand, they were proud of the way in which their port had grown. On the other hand, in league with many other North Canterbury settlements, they were pushing for a railway which they knew would kill the port trade. Some people believed that Kaiapoi should be the southern terminus of the northern railway, thus retaining the Kaiapoi-Lyttelton shipping link. When the Government proposed a railway linking Christchurch with the north it was accused of killing the port of Kaiapoi and picking up all the trade for the Lyttelton line. Perhaps the festivities marking the opening of the railway to Kaiapoi on April 29, 1872 were dampened by the expectation that when the first train pulled into the station the last vessel would be on its way down the river.

With the coming of the railway, trade patterns changed. No longer was it necessary to ship goods to Lyttelton or the Estuary ports. The vessels were used to carry farm produce to Wellington and the lower ports of the North Island.

In 1876 the Waimakariri Navigation Improvement Committee was formed to look after trade to the town and, later that year, the Waimakariri Harbour Act was passed. The Harbour Board first met on February 12, 1877. Although it had no money, it had the power to raise a loan of £1,000 to carry out the necessary improvements to the port.

A local settler, John Sims, chartered two schooners in 1877 for the North Island trade. He was so successful that he was soon chartering two more. On the return voyage the vessels would call into the west coast ports to load timber and coal for North Canterbury. This trade lasted until the opening of the Otira Tunnel in 1923, after which all coal and timber was transported to the east coast by rail.

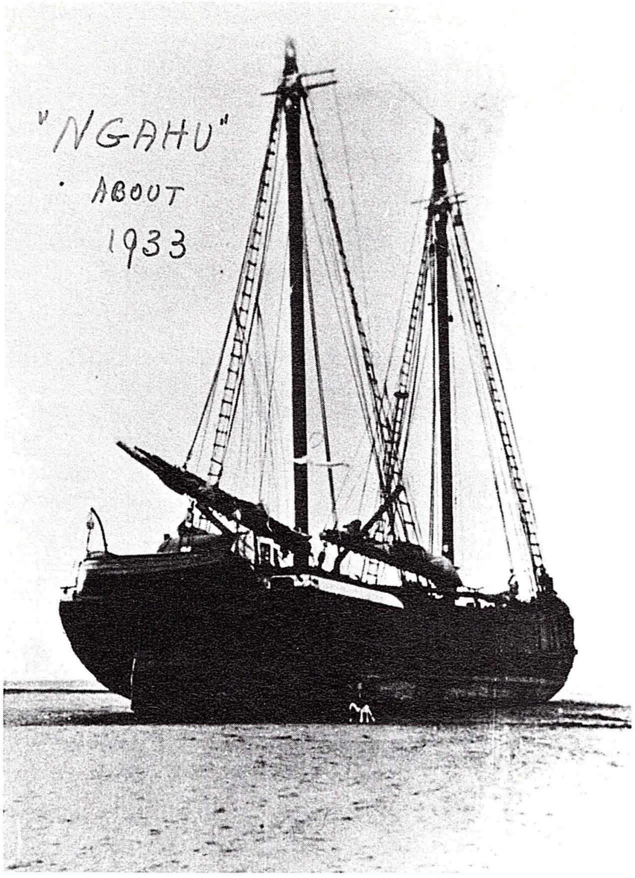
The Harbour Board purchased a hopper dredge in 1878 for £578 but could not use it to its full extent because of lack of



The Kairaki: *new steamer of the Kaiapoi Shipping & Trading Co, making its first visit to Kaiapoi on September 1, 1909.*

The steamer's arrival at Kaiapoi occasioned the liveliest interest in that town, and as much of the population as was able, dressed in holiday attire, crowded the wharf and bridge, and gave the new steamer a hearty welcome. A big banner, emblazoned with "Welcome from Kaiapoi", was displayed at the wharf, and from impromptu masts there flew a complete miniature signal code. Flags flew at poles on the company's office and elsewhere in the town. The little vessel's performance in reaching Kaiapoi was excellent. She took only two hours and a half from the wharf at Lyttelton to that at Kaiapoi. There was a moderate sea on the bar when she arrived, but it proved easy to negotiate.

Photograph: Canterbury Museum.



Strandings could be a nuisance, holding up the vessel while it waited for a favourable tide to re-float her. Occasionally, though, strandings could be put to good use. Once when the Ngahau *was stranded on the Waimakariri Bar, in 1934, the crew took the opportunity to replace a broken propeller.*
Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

finance. Help was promised by the Government but never came and the Board struggled on, dredging only spasmodically. In 1884 the channel and Bar were marked by 24 buoys.

A large flood in 1885 was to be a bonus to the Board as it cleared the river and enabled the Board to sell its dredge. The proceeds were not enough however, to cover the cost of a new wharf and railway siding which the Board wanted to provide.

A new dredge, the *Hinemoa*, was purchased at a cost of £418. It did not perform successfully however, and in 1897 was washed out to sea in a flood and lost. Despite the lack of a dredge and the damage caused to vessels grounding on the bar and sandbanks, the port was busy handling North Island cargoes.

Sims' fleet grew and he was often obliged to charter extra vessels to carry the cargo offering. Like many other ship-owners, Sims suffered losses, with three vessels wrecked.

A large public ceremony was held at Kaiapoi to name the replacement schooners, *Joseph Sims*, *Emelia Sims* and *Emma Sims*, all named after members of the owner's family.

When Sims retired from business in 1908 many feared that the Port of Kaiapoi was finished. In fact Government approval for the Boaard to raise a loan of £2,000 meant that much-needed improvements could be carried out. With the money, the Board built a 420 foot groyne at Stewarts Gully to improve the channel, employed extra staff to man the port, and was once again able to purchase a dredge, to replace the one lost in 1897.

The Board received a regular income from a levy of 4d. a ton on shipping and the issuing of licenses to launches using the river.

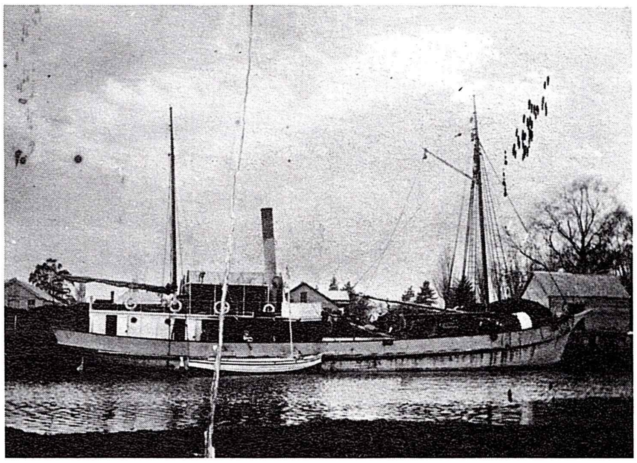
The Kaiapoi Shipping and Trading Company was formed in 1906 and began trading from the port with the 151 ton steamer *Wootton*. She was too small for the service however and the Company soon acquired the steamer *Kairaki*. She was an ideal river craft, with a draught of 10 feet, and a capacity to carry 580 tons of cargo. The *Kairaki* traded with ports in the lower North Island, the Marlborough Sounds and Kaikoura. Between 1910 and 1914 the Company handled 3,609,135 feet of timber, 1,421 tons of coal, 822 bales of wool, 1,652 cattle, 145,265 sheep, 69,474 sacks and 291 tons of general cargo.

During this time the Bar continued to give problems. Plans to remedy this were drawn up but once again were beyond the means of the Harbour Board to construct.

The sinking of the *Kairaki* in a storm off Greymouth on September 25, 1914, with the loss of her crew of 17, was a severe blow to the company. Nevertheless, they continued trading, using the Wootton which called at Kaiapoi spasmodically until 1915.

After the First World War plans for improving the Port of Kaiapoi were once more considered, not only to serve the needs of North Canterbury, but to relieve possible congestion at Lyttelton. An Empowering Act in 1916 authorised the Harbour Board to raise £50,000. By 1920 plans had been drawn up, estimated to cost £75,000, for wharves, a slip, cattle handling facilities, retaining walls and a turning basin. But despite initial enthusiasm local interest soon waned. It was briefly revived on May 19, 1924 when the Wootton sailed up the river and the people of Kaiapoi believed they were witnessing the re-opening of their port. It was the first vessel to visit Kaiapoi since 1915, and it turned out to be the last for nearly a decade. The Kaiapoi Shipping and Trading Company finally wound up its operations in 1928.

The Canterbury Steam Shipping Company began a Lyttelton-Kaiapoi-Foxton service in 1930 with the diesel-engined, 224 ton *Foxton*. Because of the difficulty of working the river



The motor vessel Wootton *at the Kaiapoi Wharf.*
Photograph: Canterbury Museum.

ports at Foxton and Kaiapoi, with the vessel often being stranded for days at a time, the service was not a success and the *Foxton* was sold in 1939.[140]

Another brief flurry of activity occurred in the 1934-5 season when the scow *Ngahau* transported large consignments of lambs from the farms of Banks Peninsula to the freezing works at Kaiapoi. In the winter of 1934 both the *Ngahau* and the *Foxton* shipped over 1,000 tons of cargo, mostly potatoes, from Kaiapoi to Wellington. The agent for these sailings was C Morgan Williams and Son Limited, a firm that was instrumental in re-opening the port at a later date.

With the departure of the *Ngahau* the people of Kaiapoi were sure that they had seen the last of their port. The Harbour Board was abolished in 1946 and its interests were taken over by the Kaiapoi Borough Council.[141]

But Kaiapoi was not finished. In 1958 the Borough Council, in its capacity as Harbour Board, was persuaded to re-open the port because of congestion at Lyttelton, prior to the construction of Cashin Quay. The merchants of Kaiapoi, led by C Morgan Williams and Son, saw the re-opening of the port as a quick way of shipping their farm produce to Wellington.

Before the port could open improvements had to be made. The timbers in the old wharf, built early in the century, were found to be in reasonable condition and only a few repairs were necessary. The berth was dredged so that flat-bottomed scows could sit on the mud at low tide, a turning basin was formed, and the old shed was refurbished to provide cargo storage space.

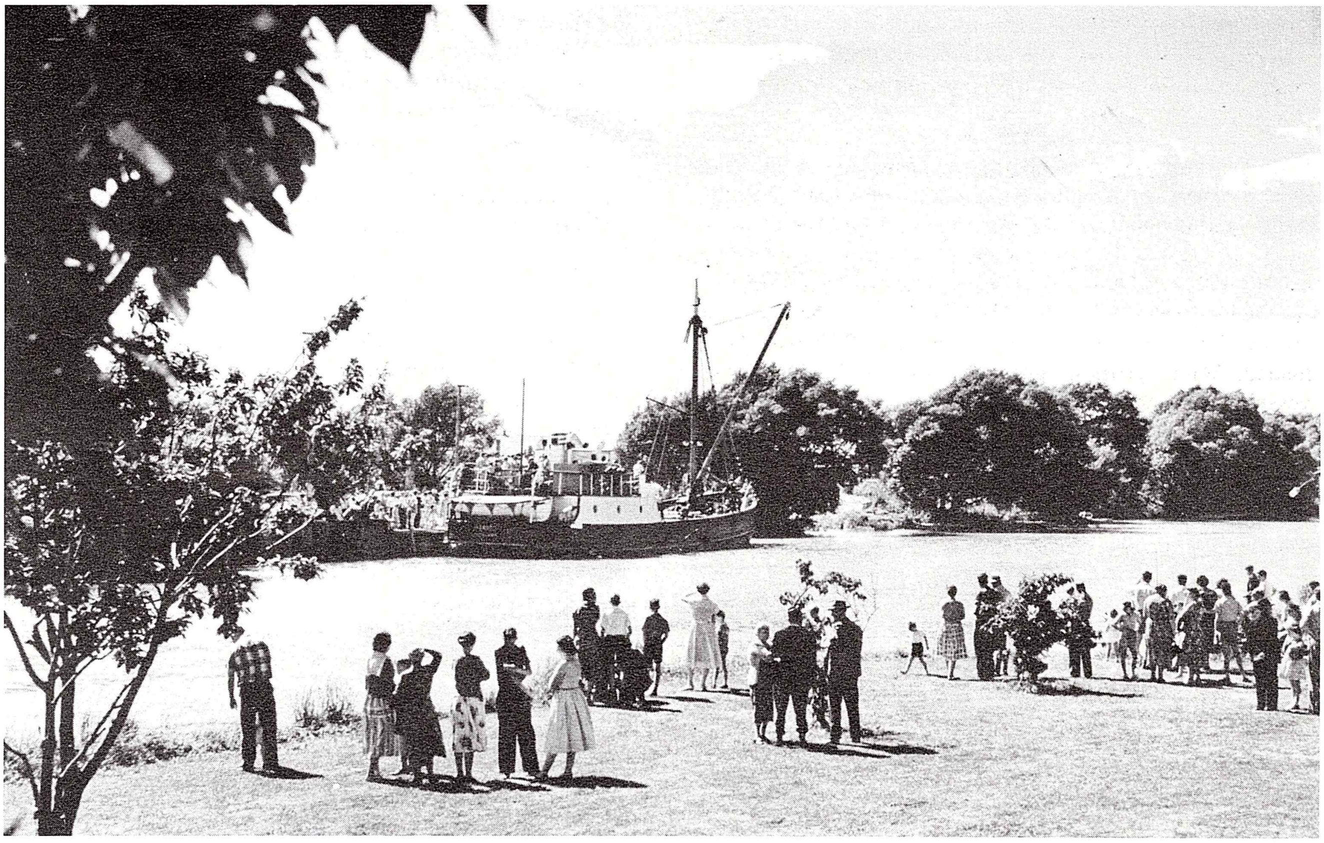
Sunday, November 16, 1958 was a red letter day in the history of the Port of Kaiapoi. Early that morning hundreds of people lined the banks of the river and the shoreline to witness the arrival of the *Paroto*, the first vessel to visit Kaiapoi for close on 20 years. The *Paroto* was a 124 ton vessel with a draught of 6 feet 6 inches, owned by the Collingwood Shipping Company. After safely negotiating the Bar at 7.15am the vessel proceeded up the river accompanied by many small boats. Her twin screws aided turning in the confined turning basin and by 8.15 am she was tied up alongside the wharf.

Despite the many spectators and the official welcome, cargo was quickly unloaded and the first truck-load was on its way to Christchurch by 8.45am. The *Paroto* was loaded with new cargo and away on the tide at 10.15am the following Wednesday and had returned from a round trip to Wellington by the next Monday.

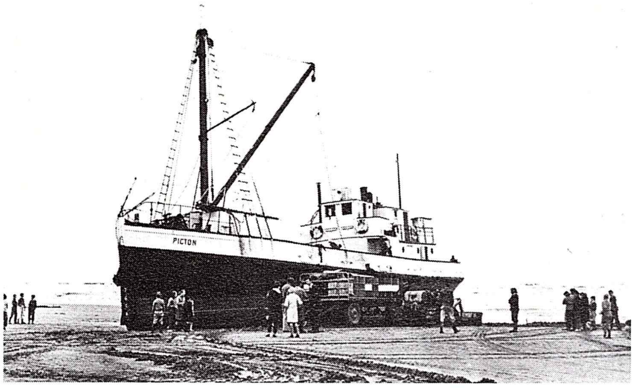
Her place at the Kaiapoi Wharf was taken by the *Ranginui*, a 158 ton vessel, which arrived without ceremony on November 20. She had left Lyttelton half laden and called at Kaiapoi to top up her cargo with barley, flour, footwear, foodstuffs and building materials.

The *Ranginui* was larger than the *Paroto* and trimmed many of the overhanging willows on her way up river.

Because of an injury to her captain in a motor accident she did not make the quick turn-round expected of her and sailed for Wellington a day late. The unscheduled departure led to a yacht race at Kairaki being interrupted to allow her to pass along the river.



The arrival of the Paroto *on Sunday, November 16, 1958, signals the re-opening of the Port of Kaiapoi.*
Photograph: McKay Collection, Canterbury Museum.



While the Port of Kaiapoi operated from 1958 to 1967 the Bar did not cause any major problems. There were, however, many strandings, which usually meant waiting for the next high tide. On July 11, 1959 the Picton *spent the day on a sandbank at the river mouth, and again spent three days aground in May 1961.*

Photograph: McKay Collection, Canterbury Museum.

The re-opening of the port was very successful and soon large amounts of cargo were accumulating on the wharf awaiting shipment. Four motor trucks were kept busy clearing the cargo and the railway brought much farm produce from North Canterbury for shipment to the North Island.

The two vessels kept up a continuous service, staying only one or two days in Kaiapoi, depending on the tides.[142] By 1961 trade had increased to the stage where extra vessels were required to handle it. The Inter-Island Shipping Company, formerly the Collingwood Shipping Company, added a further vessel, the *Taupata*, to its fleet and introduced a service to Wellington, three times a week.

In the same year the Kaiapoi Shipping Company was formed. The shareholders were C Morgan Williams and Son, along with the crew and wives of the motor vessel *Toa*. The *Toa* made her maiden voyage to Kaiapoi on April 16, 1961. She was built in Auckland in 1927 with a kauri hull, and had traded successfully around Auckland and the Bay of Plenty. *Toa* was 107 feet long and had a draught of seven feet four inches when loaded. With a gross weight of 215 tons she was the largest vessel to work the Kaiapoi River.

In addition, Holm and Company had earlier entered the Kaiapoi trade with its vessel *Picton*, trading to the North Island. *Picton* was a fast ship and set a record in 1959 by being in Kaiapoi three times within one week.

In an article dated April 16, 1961 the "Christchurch Press" gave some interesting statistics on the Port of Kaiapoi trade. Since re-opening in 1958, more than 63,000 tons of cargo had been handled. The *Ranginui* had made 75 round trips to Wellington, the *Paroto* 79, the *Picton* 27, and the *Taupata* 3. Cargo handling had become so efficient that goods were available in Christchurch an hour after discharge at Kaiapoi.

With so many vessels using the river it became necessary for the Kaiapoi Borough Council to purchase a pilot boat in 1964. Built by Stark of Lyttelton, the *Kaiapoi* was 30 feet long and had a draught of three feet. She was powered by a 20 horsepower diesel engine. She foundered on the Bar in October 1967 and was salvaged, repaired and back in service in three days.

Although the port was re-opened to serve the needs of the farmers and merchants of North Canterbury, it was soon being widely used by businesses in Christchurch. The Port of Lyttelton was congested and, by bypassing Lyttelton and shipping goods through Kaiapoi, valuable time could be saved on the trip to Wellington.

This was not without its humorous side. On one occasion a vessel of the Lyttelton Harbour Board was unable to work because it required a spare part available only in Wellington. Rather than face delays, the Wellington merchant shipped the part through Kaiapoi. This raised questions at the next Lyttelton Harbour Board meeting but did prove to them that the service through Kaiapoi had its advantages.

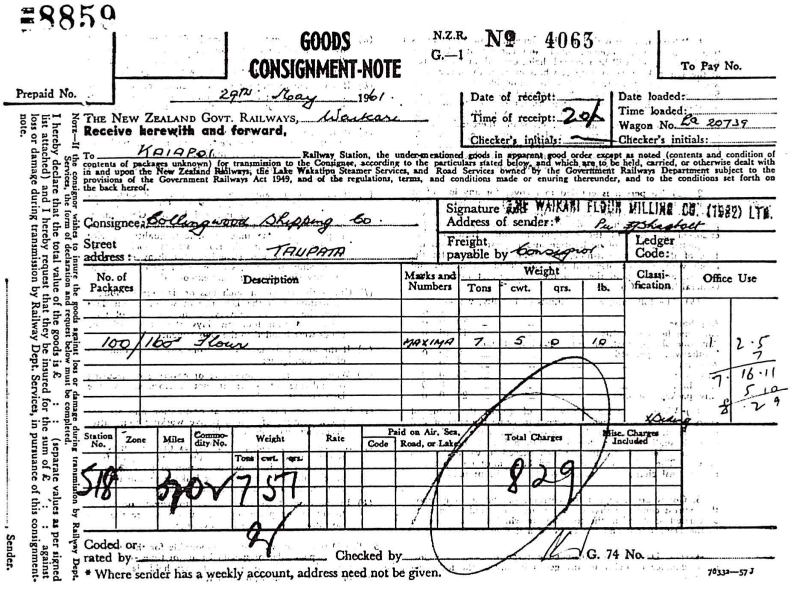
This buoyant trade was not to last, however. Once more it was the railway which was to bring about the demise of the Port, this time in the form of the Cook Strait Rail Ferries. Not only did this new service affect the Port of Kaiapoi, it also spelt the end of most of the coastal shipping on the inter-island run. When the *Aramoana* entered the Picton-Wellington service in August 1962, she provided a very popular service. While the service was confined to one ship there was still some cargo for the small ships involved in the inter-island trade. With the addition of the "Aranui" to the run in 1966, however, the rail ferries could handle all the trade offering and the small coastal fleet was laid up.

The Kaiapoi trade was dealt another severe blow when the *Paroto* was wrecked in 1966. Fully laden, she had left Wellington for Kaiapoi. Early on the morning of August 3, 1966 she ran aground in thick fog on Point Gibson at the south of Gore Bay. The crew got off safely and the cargo was salvaged by means of a breeches buoy (a type of flying fox), but the vessel remained firmly ashore and all attempts to re-float her were unsuccessful. On this trip she was carrying 90 tons of general cargo, including 193 drums of motor oil and 30 tons of nuts and bolts. Some of the useful fittings and equipment were salvaged but after two years of exposure to the elements the vessel began to break up.

All services to the Port of Kaiapoi ceased when the last vessel, the *Waiotahi*, landed a cargo of butter from Takaka, on November 6, 1967. The cost of operating the small ships, maintaining the port, and the loss of cargoes to the rail-ferries were all contributing factors in its closure. By 1967 the total tonnage through Kaiapoi was down to 9,000 tons. The Port was officially declared closed in 1969.

Many of the small ships still exist. The *Ranginui* was sold and to the present day is moored in Dusky Sound where it is used as a deer recovery vessel. Even as the *Waiotahi* was making her last call at Kaiapoi she was under offer to a new owner. The *Picton* was later used as a fishing boat only to be wrecked at Raoul Island, the largest island of the Kermadec group, in the Pacific.

One of the last vessels to enter the Kaiapoi trade has stayed on and her name is well known in Christchurch and North Canterbury. She is the motor vessel *Tuhoe*. Built in Auckland as an auxiliary schooner and powered by two 60 horsepower engines, she saw service in the Auckland area, and served in the Pacific during the Second World War.



8859

Prepaid No.

GOODS CONSIGNMENT-NOTE

N.Z.R. G.—1 Nº 4063

To Pay No.

29th May 1961

THE NEW ZEALAND GOVT. RAILWAYS, Waikari

Receive herewith and forward,

To KAIAPOI Railway Station, the under-mentioned goods in apparent good order except as noted (contents and condition of contents of packages unknown) for transmission to the Consignee, according to the particulars stated below, and which are to be held, carried, or otherwise dealt with in and upon the New Zealand Railways, the Lake Wakatipu Steamer Services, and Road Services owned by the Government Railways Department subject to the provisions of the Government Railways Act 1949, and of the regulations, terms, and conditions made or enuring thereunder, and to the conditions set forth on the back hereof.

Date of receipt:

Time of receipt: 2.0

Checker's initials:

Date loaded:

Time loaded:

Wagon No. La 20739

Checker's initials:

Consignee: Collingwood Shipping Co.

Street address: TAUPATA

Signature and Address of sender:* THE WAIKARI FLOUR MILLING CO. (1952) LTD.

Freight payable by consignor

Ledger Code:

No. of Packages	Description	Marks and Numbers	Weight Tons	cwt.	qrs.	lb.	Classification	Office Use
100	160s Flour	MAXIMA	7	5	0	10		1. 2.5 7 7. 16.11 5.10 8. 2.9

Station No.	Zone	Miles	Commodity No.	Weight Tons	cwt.	qrs.	Rate	Paid on Air, Sea, Road, or Lake Code		Total Charges	Misc. Charges Included
518		37	02	7	5	7				8 2 9	

Coded or rated by

Checked by

G. 74 No.

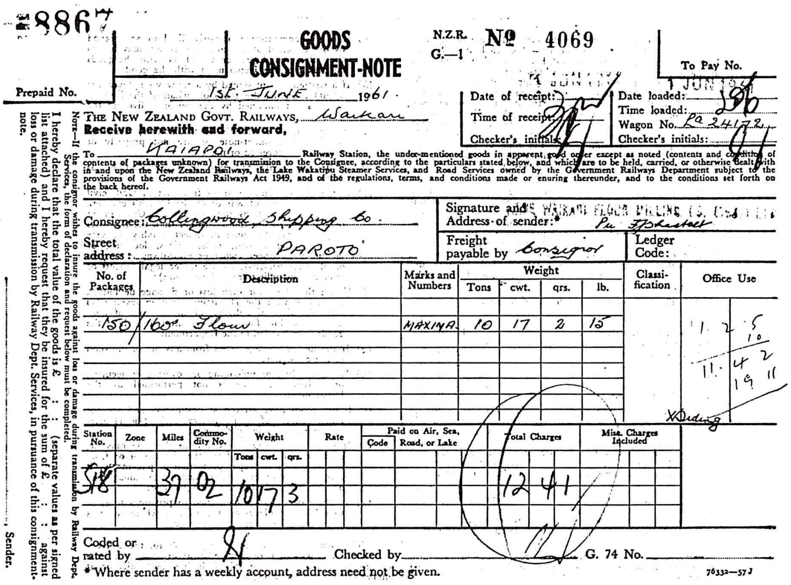
* Where sender has a weekly account, address need not be given.

76332—57 J

NOTE—If the consignor wishes to insure the goods against loss or damage during transmission by Railway Dept. Services, the form of declaration and request below must be completed.

I hereby declare that the total value of the goods is £ : : (separate values as per signed list attached) and I hereby request that they be insured for the sum of £ : : against loss or damage during transmission by Railway Dept. Services, in pursuance of this consignment-note.

........., Sender.



8867

Prepaid No.

GOODS CONSIGNMENT-NOTE

N.Z.R. G.—1 Nº 4069

To Pay No.

1 JUN 19

1st JUNE 1961

THE NEW ZEALAND GOVT. RAILWAYS, Waikari

Receive herewith and forward,

To KAIAPOI Railway Station, the under-mentioned goods in apparent good order except as noted (contents and condition of contents of packages unknown) for transmission to the Consignee, according to the particulars stated below, and which are to be held, carried, or otherwise dealt with in and upon the New Zealand Railways, the Lake Wakatipu Steamer Services, and Road Services owned by the Government Railways Department subject to the provisions of the Government Railways Act 1949, and of the regulations, terms, and conditions made or enuring thereunder, and to the conditions set forth on the back hereof.

Date of receipt:

Time of receipt:

Checker's initials:

Date loaded:

Time loaded:

Wagon No. La 24172

Checker's initials:

Consignee: Collingwood, Shipping Co.

Street address: PAROTO

Signature and Address of sender:* THE WAIKARI FLOUR MILLING CO.

Freight payable by consignor

Ledger Code:

No. of Packages	Description	Marks and Numbers	Weight Tons	cwt.	qrs.	lb.	Classification	Office Use
150	160s Flour	MAXIMA	10	17	2	15		1. 2. 5 10 11. 4 2 19 11

Station No.	Zone	Miles	Commodity No.	Weight Tons	cwt.	qrs.	Rate	Paid on Air, Sea, Road, or Lake Code		Total Charges	Misc. Charges Included
518		37	02	10	17	3				12 4 1	

Coded or rated by

Checked by

G. 74 No.

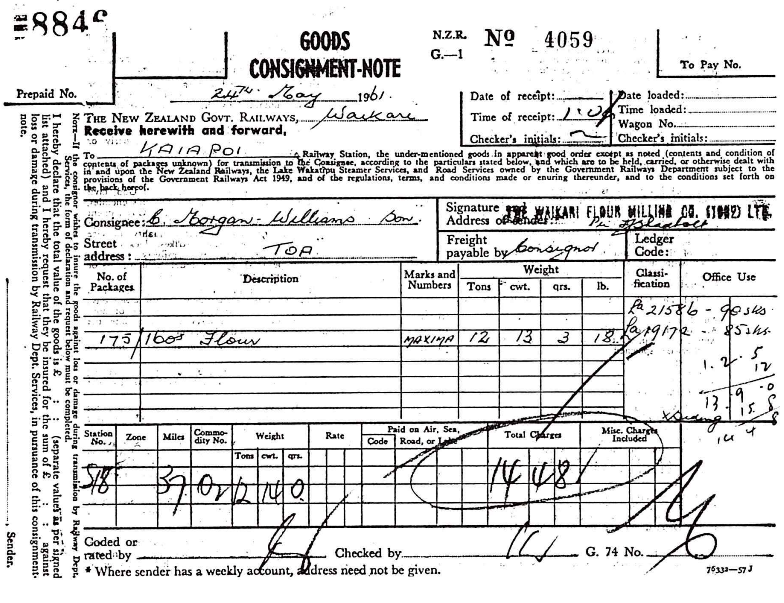
* Where sender has a weekly account, address need not be given.

76332—57 J

NOTE—If the consignor wishes to insure the goods against loss or damage during transmission by Railway Dept. Services, the form of declaration and request below must be completed.

I hereby declare that the total value of the goods is £ : : (separate values as per signed list attached) and I hereby request that they be insured for the sum of £ : : against loss or damage during transmission by Railway Dept. Services, in pursuance of this consignment-note.

........., Sender.



8846

Prepaid No.

GOODS CONSIGNMENT-NOTE

N.Z.R. G.—1 Nº 4059

To Pay No.

24th May 1961

THE NEW ZEALAND GOVT. RAILWAYS, Waikari

Receive herewith and forward,

To KAIAPOI Railway Station, the under-mentioned goods in apparent good order except as noted (contents and condition of contents of packages unknown) for transmission to the Consignee, according to the particulars stated below, and which are to be held, carried, or otherwise dealt with in and upon the New Zealand Railways, the Lake Wakatipu Steamer Services, and Road Services owned by the Government Railways Department subject to the provisions of the Government Railways Act 1949, and of the regulations, terms, and conditions made or enuring thereunder, and to the conditions set forth on the back hereof.

Date of receipt:

Time of receipt: 1.0

Checker's initials:

Date loaded:

Time loaded:

Wagon No.

Checker's initials:

Consignee: C. Morgan-Williams Son.

Street address: TOA

Signature and Address of sender:* THE WAIKARI FLOUR MILLING CO. (1952) LTD.

Freight payable by Consignor

Ledger Code:

No. of Packages	Description	Marks and Numbers	Weight Tons	cwt.	qrs.	lb.	Classification	Office Use
							La 21586 - 90 sks	
175	160s Flour	MAXIMA	12	13	3	18	La 19172 - 85 sks	1. 2. 5 12 13. 9. 0 15. 8 14 4

Station No.	Zone	Miles	Commodity No.	Weight Tons	cwt.	qrs.	Rate	Paid on Air, Sea, Road, or Lake Code		Total Charges	Misc. Charges Included
518		37	02	12	14	0				14 4 8	

Coded or rated by

Checked by

G. 74 No.

* Where sender has a weekly account, address need not be given.

76332—57 J

NOTE—If the consignor wishes to insure the goods against loss or damage during transmission by Railway Dept. Services, the form of declaration and request below must be completed.

I hereby declare that the total value of the goods is £ : : (separate values as per signed list attached) and I hereby request that they be insured for the sum of £ : : against loss or damage during transmission by Railway Dept. Services, in pursuance of this consignment-note.

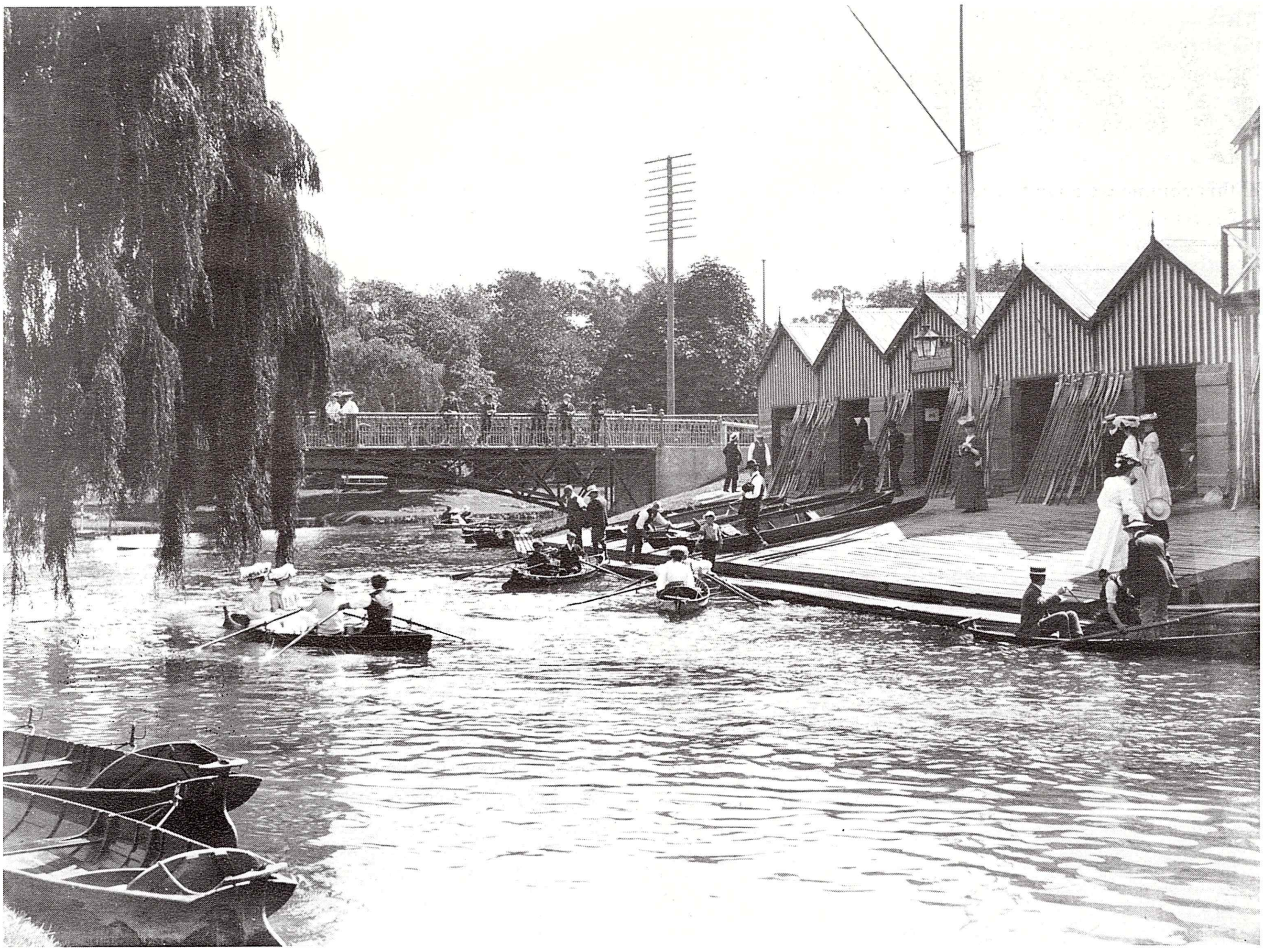
........., Sender.

When the Port of Kaiapoi was sucessfully re-opened in the 1950's, it served the needs of much of North Canterbury. These consignment notes from mid 1961 are for flour from the mill at Waikari which was railed to Kaiapoi for shipping through that port for North Island destinations. The introduction of rail ferries from Picton in 1962 saw the decline of this local shipping trade, which ceased in 1967. *Les Dew Collection*

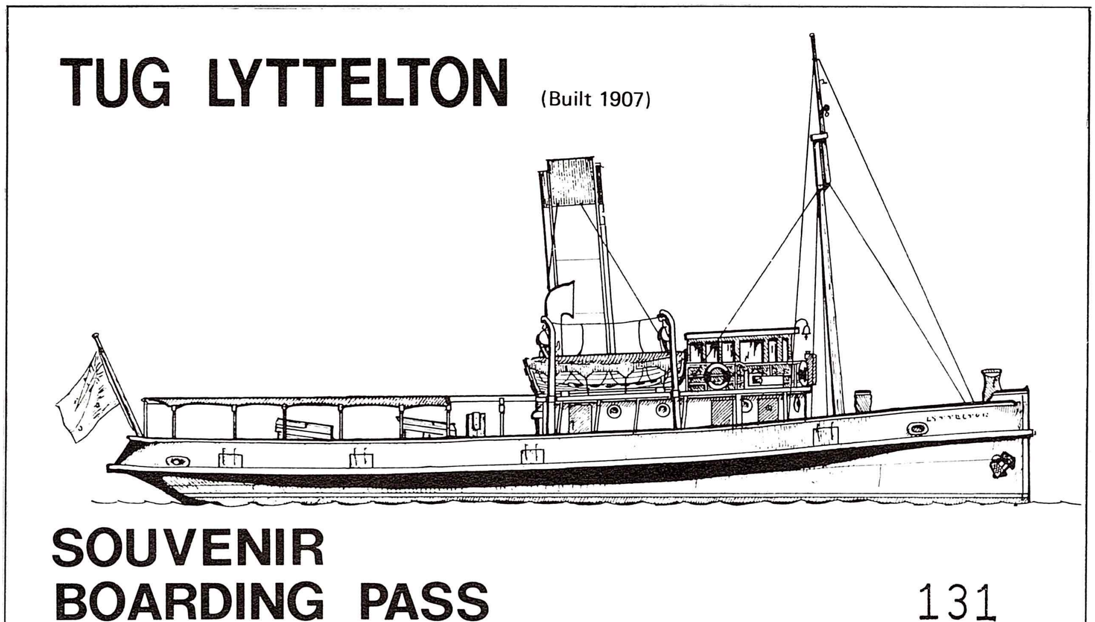
The Kaiapoi Shipping Company bought her in 1962 for use on the Kaiapoi to Wellington run. However, the Company suffered hard financial times and stopped trading in November 1963. After a short period when she was used for line fishing, the *Tuhoe* was laid up at Kaiapoi. Her next trip across the Waimakariri Bar was in 1982 when she sailed to Lyttelton for repairs and a refit as a tourist vessel.

She made her first trip between Kaiapoi and Kairaki, at the mouth of the Waimakariri River, on October 31, 1983. Since that time she has been run by the Tuhoe Restoration Society and has delighted many visitors with a leisurely cruise along the river.

The motor vessel Tuhoe *glides down the Kaiapoi River in 1990 on one of its tourist trips to Kairaki. These trips have proved popular during the summer months since 1983.* *Photographs: Les Dew.*



The Antigua Boatsheds in the early 1900s. Only the style of clothing and the type of boat have changed. Otherwise this photograph could have been taken at the present time. Boating on the Avon has remained a popular Christchurch pastime for over 100 years. *Photograph: Canterbury Museum.*



TUG LYTTELTON (Built 1907)

SOUVENIR
BOARDING PASS 131

HARBOUR TRIPS, CHARTER CRUISES

PO BOX 19659 CHRISTCHURCH, TUG LYTTELTON PRESERVATION SOCIETY (Inc.)

The steam tug Lyttelton *was built in 1907 and served the port for many years. It is now owned by the "Tug Lyttelton Preservation Society" and makes regular cruises in and around Lyttelton Harbour during the summer. It also pays an annual visit to Akaroa at New Year, where it is also used for harbour cruises.* *Les Dew Collection*

afterword

In this volume we have traced the great debt the early settlers of Canterbury owed to a flotilla of small ships which transported them and their goods when no other means of transport existed. In its own way this flotilla must have been as important to the people of the time as the famous fleet of small vesels at Dunkirk, in the Second World War.

Although it formed an essential part of the new colony's early transport, shipping in such conditions was both costly and dangerous. It could not last. Local shipping was surpassed by the spreading network of railways, tramways and roads in much the same way as the world's large passenger liners were surpassed by swift, modern aircraft.

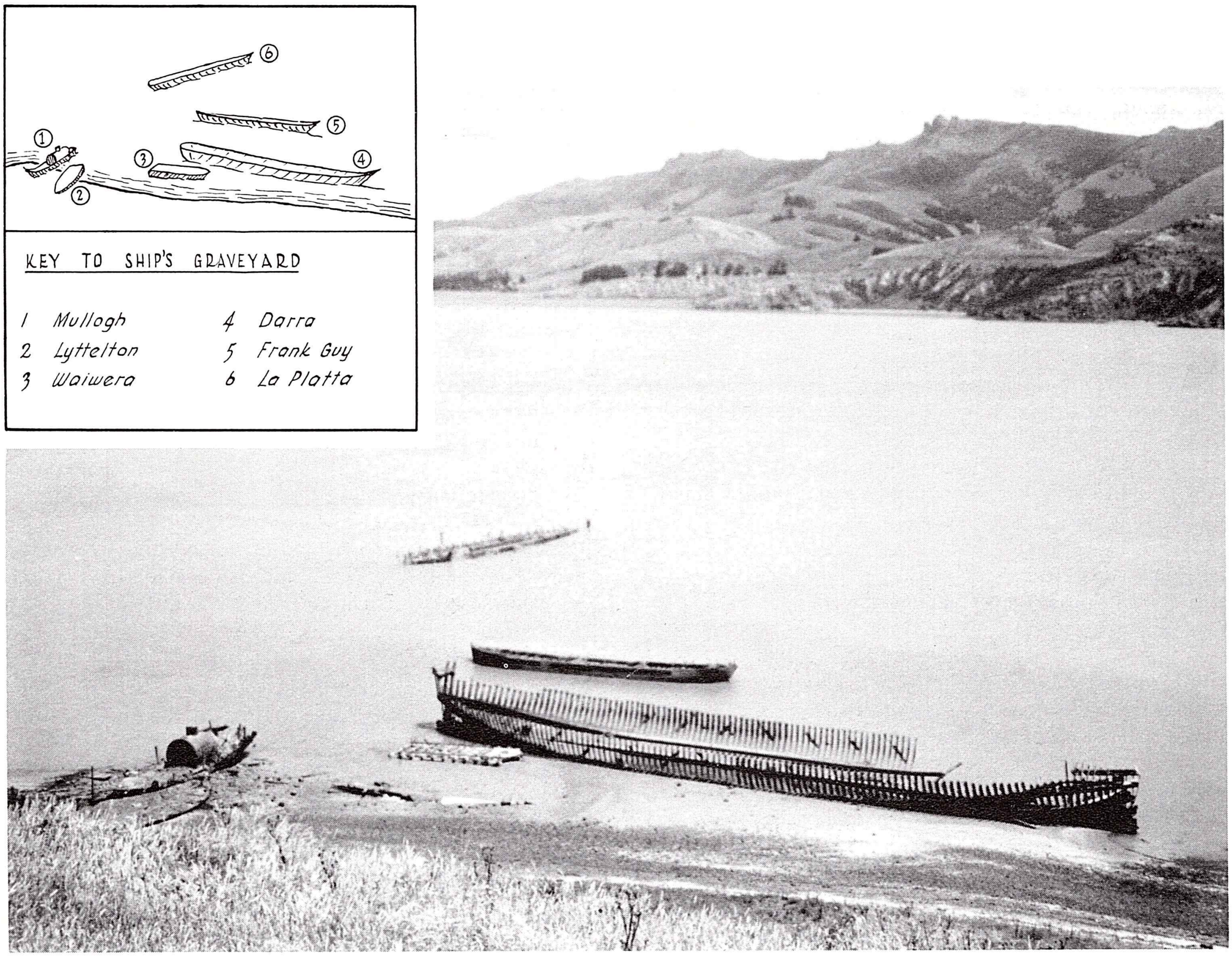
But the romance of the sea is still with us. Just as large numbers of people cruise through the world's oceans in the luxury of passenger vessels, many people enjoy their leisure time locally on vessels plying the rivers and harbours around Canterbury.

Launches still run regular passenger services to Diamond Harbour, Quail Island and Ripapa Island. Both launches and the old steam tug *Lyttelton* run many sightseeing services in the Lyttelton and Akaroa Harbours. The *Tuhoe* makes excursion trips along the Kaiapoi and Waimakariri Rivers between Kaiapoi and Kairaki.

The Avon River and the Estuary are used extensively for recreation. The yachts, power boats, wet bikes, and windsurfers make the Estuary a busy and colourful place on a summer weekend. At Kerrs Reach, on the Avon, oarsmen can be seen practising for regattas, while further up the river people in canoes and punts settle back for a leisurely voyage through the city centre or the Botanic Gardens.

Although the waterways of Canterbury have been bypassed by more modern forms of transport, it is comforting to think that they still give pleasure to so many people.

When next you take a trip along the river or harbour, or gaze down at the rivers from one of the many bridges throughout Christchurch, spare a thought for the famous flotilla of vessels which made the early settlement of the province possible. Remember also the unsung heroes who manned the vessels and risked their lives in all weathers, and the crew of the Sumner Lifeboat Institution and the Lyttelton Coastguard who keep a watchful eye on all those using the waterways to the present day.



The End. Part of the Ships' Graveyard at Quail Island. *Photograph and diagram: Les Dew*

glossary

Barque or Bark: A sailing vessel, square-rigged on the fore and mainmasts, fore-and-aft rigged on the mizzen. [See diagrams under "Sails and sailing ships"] The term Bark is used in the United States of America.

Beam: The side of a vessel, at right angles to the keel. A term used when referring to the direction of the wind, sea, etc.

Bonded warehouse: A warehouse for holding goods until customs duties have been paid.

Breeches buoy: A ring lifebuoy fitted with canvas breeches, used in life-saving. A jackstay (or rope) is rigged between ship and shore and the buoy, supported in a sling attached to a traveller, is hauled from ship to shore, with the survivors sitting in the breeches.

Brig: A two-masted sailing vessel, square-rigged on both masts.

Broken back: When the keel and main longitudinal structure of a vessel are broken, she is said to have broken her back.

Centreboard: A moveable keel which can be drawn up inside the vessel when it is sailing in shallow water.

Chronometer: An enlarged watch, the construction of which demands the most accurate workmanship and its adjustment requires a high degree of skill. By comparing local time with the corresponding Greenwich Mean Time, longitude at sea can be accurately calculated.

Corvette: A small warship, in sailing ship days, having a flush deck and usually only one tier of guns. The term is still used today to describe a small, fast, lightly armed warship used mainly for escort duties.

Cutter: (a) A small decked ship of one mast and bow sprit with a gaff mainsail on a boom, a square yard and topsail and two jibs.

(b) A clinker built ship's boat 24 to 32 feet in length with 8 to 14 oars. Rigged with two masts with a dipping lugsail.

Disappearing guns: Large guns set in pits. They are raised to fire, then quickly lowered into the pit to prevent their location being spotted.

Dolphin piles: A pile or cluster of piles used to guide vessels through a restricted waterway or into a difficult berth. Dolphin piles can also be used as mooring posts.

Donkey engine: A small stationary, auxiliary steam engine, with its own boiler. Those on board ship are used for a variety of mechanical tasks. Those installed on a wharf are used for hauling or hoisting loads.

Draught: The depth to which a vessel sinks in the water.

Fellmongery: A factory for processing the skins or hides of animals.

Flying fox: A device for transferring cargo from ship to shore by winching it along a rope, from which it is suspended on a pulley.

Groyne: River protection work. Usually rock walls to keep the river in its correct channel and protect the surrounding land from erosion.

Jury (as in jury-rig, jury-mast etc.): A temporary makeshift to bring a disabled vessel back to harbour.

Ketch: A sailing vessel with a large mainmast and a smaller mizzen stepped before the rudderhead. The sails on both masts are rigged fore-and-aft.

Knot: A unit of speed of one nauticle mile per hour.

Lighter: An unpowered barge (or dumb vessel) towed by tugs, used for the conveyance of cargo.

Longboat: The largest and strongest boat belonging to a sailing ship.

Mizzen mast: The aftermost mast on a vessel with two or three masts. The third mast on a vessel with more than three masts.

Mole: A breakwater, usually constructed of stone, built to protect an anchorage or harbour.

Nautical mile: A measurement equal to 6080 feet.

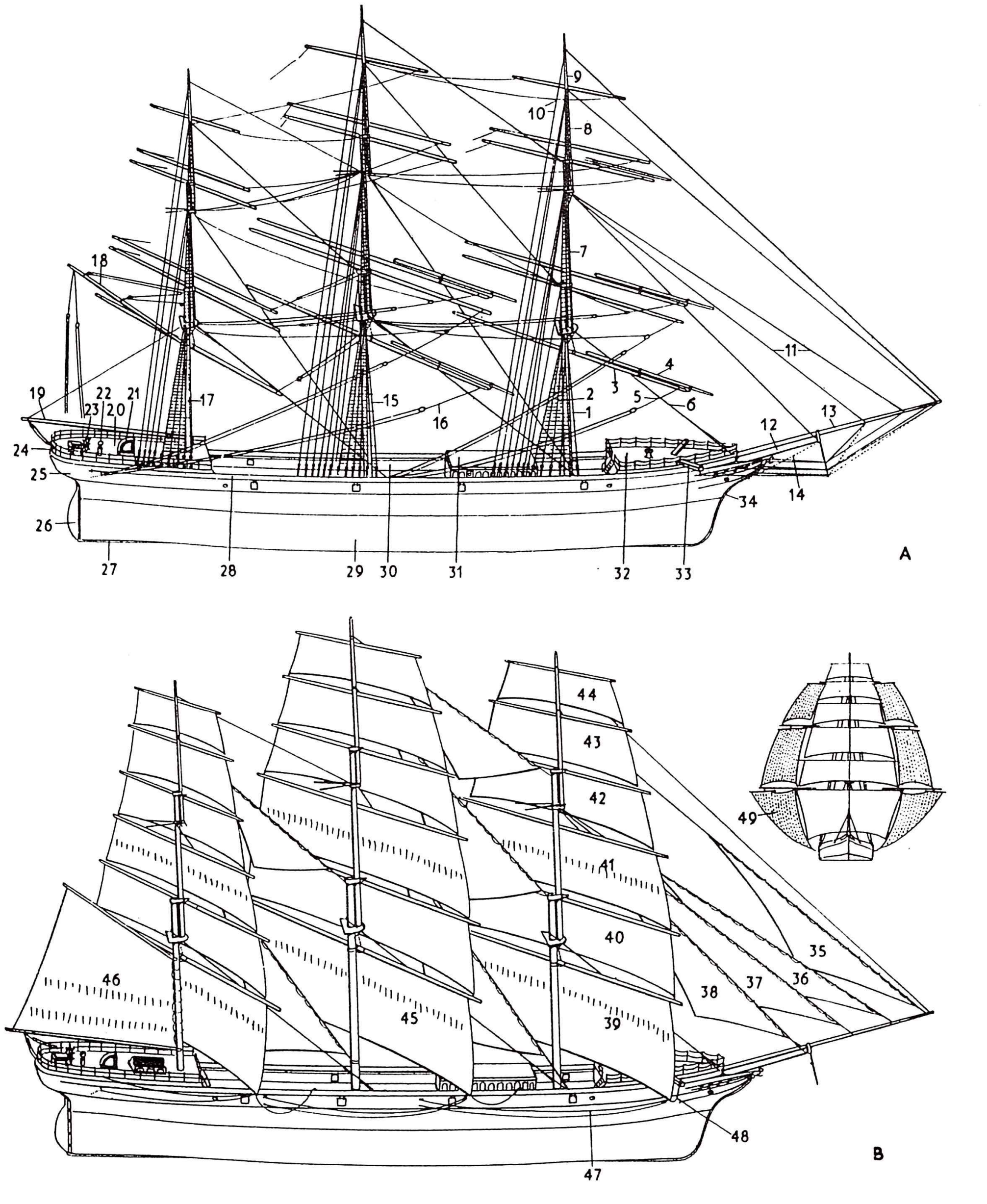
Open roadstead: An anchorage in the open sea, unprotected by breakwaters or port works of any kind, where vessels stop to load or unload cargoes. A good example of this practice can be seen in the photograph of Port Robinson, in the section on North Canterbury.

Pitsawing: An early method of sawing logs by two men using a cross-cut saw. One of the men would be on top of the log and the other would be underneath the log in a pit or depression.

Punt: A small flat-bottomed, square-ended boat, usually propelled by thrusting a pole against the river bed.

Rack and pinion: A means of shifting a load, where a cog wheel travels along a straight bar with matching teeth.

Sails and Sailing Ships:



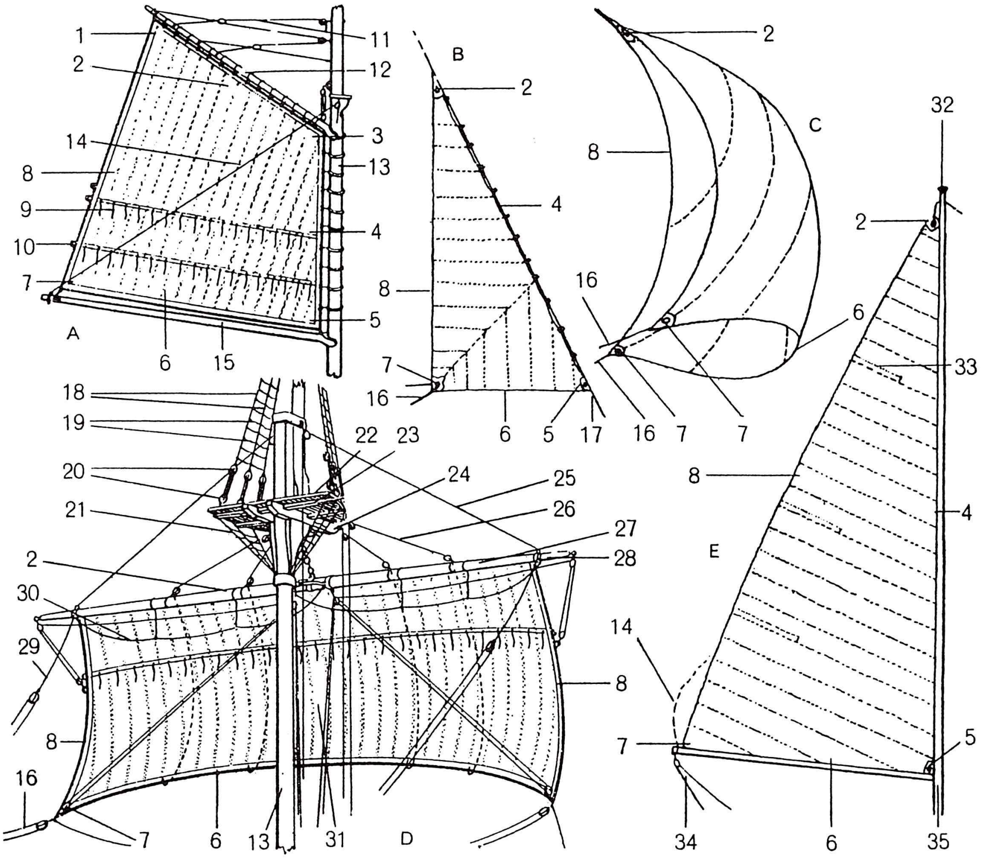
SHIP: A. RIGGING. B. SAILS (SQUARE-RIGGED)

A. Masts, spars, and rigging: 1. Foremast. 2. Fore shrouds. 3. Fore-lower yard. 4. Stunsail boom. 5. Fore brace. 6. Forestay. 7. Fore topmast. 8. Fore-topgallant mast. 9. Fore-royal mast. 10. Fore-royal backstay. 11. Jib-stays. 12. Bowsprit. 13. Jib-boom. 14. Bobstay. 15. Main-mast. 16. Mainbrace. 17. Mizzen-mast. 18. Gaff. 19. Boom. Decks and hull: 20. Poop. 21. Companionway. 22. Binnacle (holding compass). 23. Wheel or helm. 24. Taffrail. 25. Counter. 26. Rudder. 27. Keel. 28. Bulwarks. 29. Bilge. 30. Waist or amidships. 31. Deckhouse (with galley). 32. Forecastle. 33. Cat-head. 34. Stem. B. Sails: 35. Flying jib. 36. Outer jib. 37. Inner jib. 38. Fore-topmast staysail. 39. Foresail or fore-course. 40. Fore-lower topsail. 41. Fore-upper topsail. 42. Fore-lower topgallant sail. 43. Fore-upper topgallant sail. 44. Fore-royal. 45. Mainsail. 46. Spanker. 47. Fore-tack. 48. Fore-sheet. 49. Fore-lower stunsail.

(The names of the upper masts, sails, yards, stays, and braces attached to the main- and mizzen-masts follow those given for the foremast)

These diagrams illustrate many of the terms used in this volume

Courtesy: The Readers Digest



PARTS OF SAILS, SPARS, AND RIGGING. A. FORE-AND-AFT B. HEADSAIL. C. SPINNAKER. D. SQUARE. E. BERMUDAN MAINSAIL

1. Peak. 2. Head. 3. Throat. 4. Luff. 5. Tack. 6. Foot. 7. Clew. 8. Leech. 9. Reef point. 10. Cringle. 11. Halyard. 12. Gaff. 13. Mast. 14. Topping lift. 15. Boom. 16. Sheet. 17. Forestay. 18. Topmast shrouds. 19. Ratlines. 20. Deadeyes. 21. Futtock shrouds. 22. Top. 23. Cross-trees. 24. Trestle-trees. 25. Lift. 26. Buntline. 27. Yard. 28. Yard-arm. 29. Brace. 30. Foot-rope. 31. Bunt. 32. Peak halyard. 33. Batten pocket. 34. Mainsheet. 35. Mainmast

Schooner: A sailing vessel with two or more masts with sails rigged fore-and-aft.

Scow: A flat-bottomed vessel used chiefly for freight. Its design made it suitable for working in rivers, estuaries and similar shallow waterways.

Screw steamer: A vessel driven by one propeller, as opposed to a paddle-steamer.

Sea cocks: A valve which connects with the outside seawater in the lower part of the vessel. These can be used to drain water out of the hull when the vessel is out of the water.

Sheer-legs: A temporary structure of two or three spars raised at an angle and lashed together at the point of intersection, at which point a tackle is secured. Used to lift heavy weights onboard where derricks are not available. Used extensively in salvage operations where the use of conventional lifting gear is not possible.

Size: A light, glue-like substance, used for sealing, in the preparation of walls or canvas before painting or wallpapering.

Super-feet: A volumetric timber measure produced by relating the length of the timber to its cross-sectional area.

Tides: The rise and fall of the sea as the result of the attraction of the sun and moon. Flood is the flow of the tidal stream from slack water (the turn of the tide). Ebb is the flow of the tidal stream as it recedes from slack water. Tides are also influenced by high winds and storms. With all these factors influencing the tides, there is a wide range in the tide marks at both high and low water. It is normal practice, therefore, to take the average of these marks and refer to mean high water or mean low water.

Tiller: A bar or lever fitted to the head of the rudder so that the vessel can be steered by hand.

Trying Out: The boiling or rendering of whale blubber to obtain oil.

Tun: A large cask used to transport liquids, especially liquor. A tun was also a former liquid measure, now obsolete. The capacity appears to change, depending on the goods described. Various references quote a tun of wine as 252 gallons, a tun of ale as 216 gallons and a tun of whale oil as 210 gallons.

Twin–screw steamer: A vessel driven by two propellers.

Whaleboat: An open boat of robust construction modelled on boats in whaling vessels. They had no rudder and were steered by an oar over the stern. They were used in a variety of coastal work which entailed beachings and were also useful for work in rivers.

Windlass: A device, consisting of a horizontal barrel turned by a crank handle, used for lifting loads.

metrication

As this volume is written about an age before the metric system was introduced, all the information is given in imperial terms. As many readers will be unfamiliar with these terms the following tables may be of assistance.

Money:

1 pound (£1) = $2.00
1 shilling (1/–) = 10cents
6 pence (6d.) = 5cents

3 pence (3d.) had no equivalent value and was rounded down to 2 cents.

Note: These figures give a comparison of the two currencies at the time of the changeover, July 10, 1967. Before trying to equate the prices and costs quoted in the text to today's values, one must remember the huge increases in inflation that have occurred since, which make comparisons difficult.

Length:

1 inch = 25.4mm
1 foot = 305mm
1 yard = 914mm
1 chain = 20.177m
1 mile = 1.609km

Area:

1 square foot = 0.0929 square metres
1 square yard = 0.836 square metres
1 acre = 0.4047 hectares

Weight:

1 pound = 0.45 kilogram
1 ton = 1.016 tonnes

endnotes

1 = Johannes C Andersen, "Place Names of Banks Peninsula" (Wellington, 1927), (arranged in alphabetical order)
2 = S Penney, "The Estuary" (Christchurch, 1982), p 9
3 = S Natusch, "The Cruise of the Acheron" (Christchurch, 1978), p 21
4 = "New Zealand's Heritage p 561 (Volume 2)
5 = Natusch, "The Cruise of the Acheron" p 22
6 = "New Zealand's Heritage", p 561 (Volume 2)
7 = ibid., p 609 (Volume 2)
8 = Walter de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead" (Christchurch, 1976), p 32
9 = Natusch, "The Cruise of the Acheron", p 93
10 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 134
11 = Natusch, "The Cruise of the Acheron", p 170
12 = de Thier "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 133
13 = "New Zealand Railways Magazine", 1.4.1931, p 36
14 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 149
15 = For information on early road construction see Volume 1 pp 3-4
16 = W H Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton" (Christchurch, 1968),p 4
17 = Johannes C Andersen, "Old Christchurch" (Christchurch, 1949), p 10
18 = "New Zealand's Heritage", p 417 (Volume 1)
19 = A H Reed, "The Story of Canterbury" (Wellington,1949), p 54
20 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", p 32
21 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 53
22 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 150
23 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", p29
24 = ibid., p 32
25 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 467
26 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", p 54
27 = ibid., p 54
28 = ibid., p 55
29 = J P Morrison, "The Evolution of a City" (Christchurch,1948), p 25
30 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", pp 109-10
31 = Andersen, "Place Names of Banks Peninsula", pp 37 and 104
32 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 131
33 = ibid., p 133
34 = "Rescue", the journal of the Sumner Lifeboat Institution Inc., No. 33 February 1987, pp 11–13
35 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", pp 139-142
36 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", p 34
37 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 475
38 = For more on this subject see Volume 5
39 = For more on this subject see Volume 5
40 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 134
41 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 73
42 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", pp 149-51
43 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", p 62
44 = R C Lamb, "From the Banks of the Avon" (Wellington,1981),p 20
45 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 74
46 = Lamb, "From the Banks of the Avon",p 22
47 = S. Mann, "St Albans" (Christchurch,1989), p 114
48 = "Christchurch Star", 26.7.1986
49 = Lamb, "From the Banks of the Avon", p 25
50 = Pioneer Scrapbook in the New Zealand collection of the Canterbury Public Library, p 209
51 = Lamb, "From the Banks of the Avon", p 26
52 = "Lyttelton Times" 28.3.1884
53 = Christchurch City Council "Christchurch Chronology (Christchurch,1983), p 14
54 = For the history of the New Brighton tramway see Volume 3.

55 = Lamb, "From the Banks of the Avon", pp 30-1
56 = "Lyttelton Times", 18.11.1882
57 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p44
58 = "Lyttelton Times", 19.7.1892
59 = J D Wilkinson, "Early New Zealand Steamers" (Wellington,1966), pp 66-71
60 = ibid., pp 113-122
61 = The Provincial Government ran the Port of Lyttelton until the abolition of the provinces in 1876. The Lyttelton Harbour Board was then formed to take over control of the Port and held its first meeting on January 18, 1877. October 1989 saw the demise of the Lyttelton Harbour Board when control passed to a restructured Port Authority.
62 = W A Pierre, "Canterbury Provincial Railways" (Wellington,1964), p 3
63 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p176
64 = ibid., pp 154 and 161
65 = ibid., p 161
66 = ibid., p 176
67 = Pierre, "Canterbury Provincial Railways", chapter six
68 = See Volume 5, p 10
69 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 466
70 = ibid., p 466
71 = "Lyttelton Times", 1.3.1852
72 = ibid., 7.8.1852
73 = Penney, "The Estuary", p 24
74 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 185
75 = ibid., p 161
76 = ibid., p 187
77 = ibid., p 145
78 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 466
79 = "Lyttelton Times", 8.12.1860
80 = ibid.,20.9.1851
81 = ibid., 27.6.1855
82 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", p 33
83 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 185
84 = Many references to early traffic on the river are contained in unidentified and undated newspaper cuttings in the Pioneer Scrapbook, New Zealand Collection, Canterbury Public Library.
85 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 90
86 = "Lyttelton Times", 15.12.1882
87 = Register of Shipping, Canterbury Public Library, (Wellington, 1962)
88 = "Lyttelton Times", 22.11.1883
89 = ibid., 21.2.1884
90 = ibid., 28.3.1884
91 = ibid., 19.2.1885 and 25.7.1885
92 = ibid., 17.2.1887
93 = Register of Shipping, Canterbury Public Library
94 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 171
95 = "Christchurch Press", 29.6.1989
96 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 63
97 = "Christchurch Press", 29.6.1989
98 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 172
99 = ibid., p 173
100 = ibid., p 177
101 = Penney, "The Estuary", p 52
102 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 177
103 = Christchurch City Council archives, letter files and Committee reports
104 = "Christchurch Press", 14.2.1987
105 = "Lyttelton Times", 30.12.1857
106 = "Christchurch Press", 14.2.1987
107 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", p 114
108 = ibid., p 119
109 = Andersen, "Place Names of Banks Peninsula"
110 = "Christchurch Press", 14.2.1987
111 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 158
112 = "Christchurch Press", 14.2.1987
113 = This was the only portion of White's tramway to be built in the district. The history of this tramway can be found in Volume 3.
114 = Andersen, "Place Names of Banks Peninsula"
115 = Reed, "The Story of Canterbury", p 53
116 = A full description of transport around the Peninsula and life in a remote bay will be found in "The Story of Menzies Bay", by Ian Menzies.
117 = Andersen, "Place Names of Banks Peninsula"
118 = ibid.
119 = "Christchurch Press", 14.2.1987
120 = Andersen, "Place Names of Banks Peninsula"
121 = "Lyttelton Times", 18.8.1884
122 = "100 Years: Andersons" (Christchurch, 1950), p 48
123 = Menzies, "The Story of Menzies Bay, pp 190-196
124 = Andersen, "Old Christchurch", p 459
125 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton, p 210
126 = Andersen, "Place Names of Banks Peninsula"
127 = "Christchurch Press", 18.9.1956 and 17.10.1956
128 = Information on the Lyttelton Harbour launch-services came from the Shipping Register at the Canterbury Public Library, the Companies' Office records, the Lyttelton Museum and the "Christchurch Press", 17.12.1975
129 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", p 167
130 = For details of how the opening of the Lyttelton road tunnel and the building of Cashin Quay, with its transit sheds, eventually broke the New Zealand Railway's monopoly on the Lyttelton-Christchurch route, see Volume 5, pp 19-20.
131 = Scotter, "A History of the Port of Lyttelton", pp 164-175
132 = D N Hawkins, "Beyond the Waimakariri" (Christchurch, 1957), p 64
133 = See Volume 5, p 45
134 = de Thier, "Sumner to Ferrymead", p 158
135 = Hawkins, "Beyond the Waimakariri", p 2
136 = ibid., p 202
137 = "North Canterbury Gazette", 13.11.1958
138 = W J Gardner, "A History of Canterbury" (Christchruch,1971),p.240
139 = The building of the railway and its effects on the district are covered in Volume 5.
140 = G McLean, "Canterbury Coasters" (Wellington,1987), pp 26 and 65
141 = "Christchurch Press," 14.4.1961
142 = "North Canterbury Gazette", 18.11.1958

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